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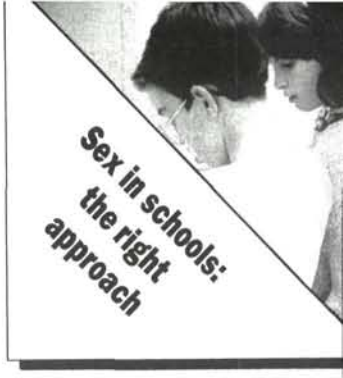


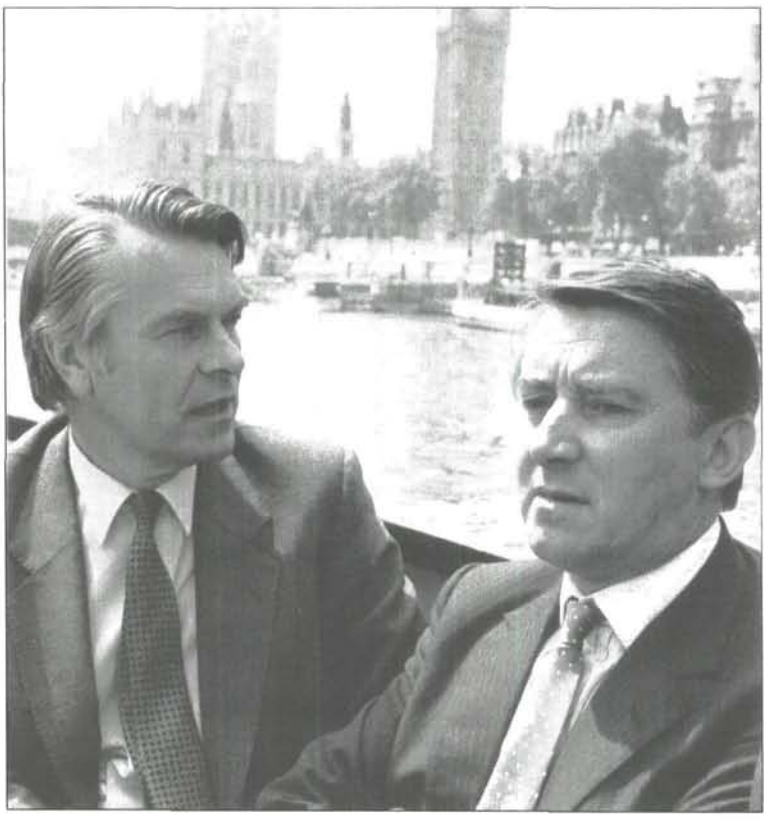
Sex in schools: the right approach

Where are the children of our Cabinet-ministers educated?

South Africa: the whites will stay but not rule

Jon Savage: megastore pop; Marsha Rowe: books for children

MOULDING THE BREAK



'The Alliance finds that creating the New Politics throws up old conflicts'

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"Pop stars are just spoiled brats surrounded by sycophants who get drunk and behave appallingly in nightclubs . . ." JOHN BLAKE OF THE DAILY MIRROR

"He was one great guy, but part of his greatness was that he was not a saint." McCARTNEY ON LENNON

"A tree impressionist." ON CHARLES BRONSON

"If your father was killed by a pig falling on his head, it is certain that whatever fame you earned, you would always be announced in terms connected with your father's demise." ON GRAHAM GREENE'S SHORT STORIES

"Hollis Brown? That's cough medicine isn't it?" RONNIE WOOD ON DYLAN

"He warned me off Yoko once: 'Look, this is my chick!' Just because he knew my reputation." McCARTNEY

"Blacks got the blues through being kicked around and subjected to the horrors of slavery and whites got 'em by listening to records, boozing, taking drugs and not washing." ON JANIS JOPLIN

"In the notebooks of New York's agents, Lenny Henry is now a name next to which many dollar signs can be doodled." ON LENNY HENRY

"We ought to be grateful to the Russians, rather than trying to blow them off the fucking planet!" BOB DYLAN

"And at number three, Metamorphosis of Narcissus by Dali." ON THE TATE'S BEST-SELLING POSTCARDS

"The state of the nation viewed through a suburban parlour window: Mother in the kitchen, Britain in the drizzle." ON BILLY BRAGG

"At last Alexander The Great can stop wandering around Mount Olympus and moaning at the other Greek immortals that he's never had a song written about him." ON IRON MAIDEN'S NEW RECORD

"Perfectly balanced – chips on both shoulders." ON BILLY JOEL

"An LP so rampantly bulging with barechested virility that people got pregnant just by reading the sleeve notes." ON WHAM!

"John's problem was the heroin." McCARTNEY

"Scientists have shown that cocaine can produce a 24 hour erection. But the eventual returns are diminishing; at first you can't get it down, and in the end you can't get it up." ON COCAINE

"All we ever are are prostitutes or African princesses." CATHY TYSON ON THE CASTING OF BLACK ACTRESSES

"The world they inhabit is notable for unfriendly animals and sluggish rivers." ON R.E.M.

"If someone took one of your wedding pictures and wrote 'funeral' on it, you'd tend to feel a bit sorry for the guy." McCARTNEY ON LENNON

"If ever a country needed scaring, it's America." AUTHOR ALAN MOORE

"Half the stuff I do is someone else's idea." BOB DYLAN

"Joe (Strummer) and I used to write everything together. Then we wrote sitting in separate parts of the same room. Then we got to the stage where we were sending lyrics over to each other through our manager." MICK JONES

"We are to Virgin what the ravens are to the Tower of London; nobody knows what good we do but if we weren't there is just wouldn't be right." ANDY PARTRIDGE ON XTC

"Q magazine is the modern guide to music and more. This month's issue is available at your newsagents now." DAVE HEPWORTH

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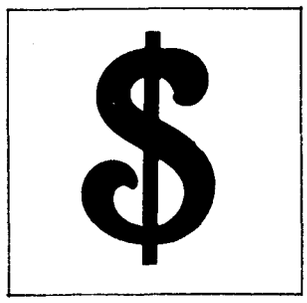
New Statesman
Vol 112 No 2894 12 September 1986

A coherent platform for Labour



ROY HATTERSLEY gave a speech last night (Thursday 11 September) to institutional investors in New York. He told them there would be a Labour government in power in Britain in less than two years' time, and they had better understand what it would be about. They *should* have understood, because it was the clearest resumé of Labour's economic strategies to date.

They should also have understood one of the two main thrusts in the speech, which was that Labour had recognised that the ground had shifted and would be — his word — prudent. Labour would be practical rather than theoretical: it would not undertake 'generalised reflation', but target public sector investment where there was least risk of sucking in imports (schools, roads, houses); the gross rise in borrowing would be less in total than in Japan, Canada or Italy (all with right-of-centre governments); inflation would be contained, in part because the unions agreed that there should be no surge in money wages; statutory exchange controls would not be introduced, in part because they would not work, in part because they would damage the status of the City as a financial centre (yes!), in part because of Labour's plans to get institutions to repatriate a large proportion of overseas investment; there would be no 'turning the clock back' on the privatisations of the Thatcher years, with the exception of the public utilities; and 'social ownership' (mixed public/private, co-ops) would replace Morrisonian public corporations. 'We remain', he concluded, 'a socialist party, but we have become a socialist party of the late 20th and early 21st century'.

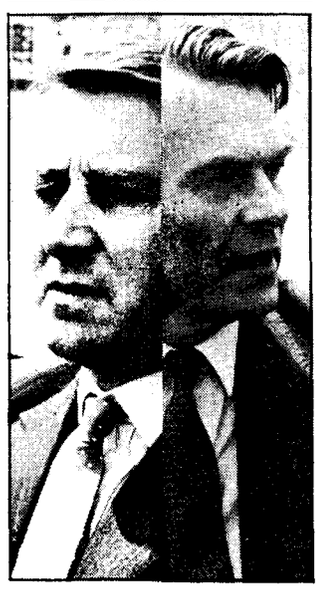
Prudent this is: but not uncontentious within his party. As he spoke, the Labour Co-ordinating Committee, which draws together the soft left, fired a broadside calling for the leadership to cease 'projecting an image of moderation' in favour of giving 'a radical cutting edge' to Party campaigns. Peter Hain, seasoned campaigner and LCC luminary, talked of too much energy being spent on trying to out-moderate the social democrats: 'why should people vote for us if we do not distinguish ourselves from them?' John Rentoul reports this week (p5) that the Alliance is not itself without dissent: but Hain's point deserves an answer.

The answer it will get, from both Hattersley and Kinnock, is that a stress on a socialist programme evacuates the centre ground which is simply not prepared for it. And here the second main thrust of Hattersley's speech comes in.

He said, to an audience he expected to be hostile, that late 20th century British socialism will target itself on reducing unemployment and assisting the poor. It would have to delay many of its hopes, even beyond the first five years of the Government he is confident will be formed: but the central projects *will* be tackled.

That, he judges, is as much as the electoral market will bear, leaving aside the City, the international financial community and British industry. That judgement will underpin Labour's pitch to the country. Hattersley's speech in New York shows that Labour's shadow treasury has a coherent (if not problem-free) platform — though its very coherence will encourage assailants from right *and* left. □

New Statesman



Cover photo: Camera Press

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PRUDENCE FARMER AWARD
— better than the Booker or the Betty Trask. PAUL MULDOON judges and reports on a year's worth of *New Statesman* poetry

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Forced to be free

The Federation of Conservative Students, fresh from branding Lord Stockton a war criminal, held its national conference in Leicester earlier this week, writes Denis Campbell. It has offended almost everyone who came: Jeffrey Archer, the Conservative Party's deputy chairman, reportedly said after the conference that the Party should reconsider cutting off its annual grant to the Federation as 'so many of its policies are pie in the sky', and alien to the traditions of Conservatism.

Among these alien policies were all-but unanimously passed resolutions in favour of the privatisation of prisons; the denationalisation of money; British withdrawal from the Commonwealth; and a 'credit', or voucher, scheme to replace the existing education system.

A resolution in favour of abolishing immigration controls was passed, if by only five votes. Proposing the motion, Harry Phibbs, recently-ousted editor of the FCS magazine, said Federation members should see themselves as 'the ideological pioneers of the Conservative Party'. Libertarian principles had to be applied internationally if they were to have any real meaning, he said.

Students opposing the plan said a policy of unrestricted immigration would damage the Conservative Party's chances at the next election. A delegate who said that 'A lot of the electorate want stricter immigration controls, and if that's what they want, that's what we'll have to give them', was met with shouts of 'You are pandering to the wishes of the electorate'. This beats the Militant tendency any day of the week.

Another delegate proposing the motion said that for libertarians the issue was a simple matter of principle. 'If you believe in the free movement of goods and services across national boundaries, then why not the free movement of labour too?

One delegate said that Britain already had too much unemployment and would not be able to find jobs for anyone who came. 'The need for the party to get a third term is greater than the need for dogma', said another speaker.

FCS chair John Bercow, a Lambeth councillor, was still smarting from a 16-1 censure vote by the national executive for his 'sell-out' over the Stockton affair. He told delegates crossly to stop 'spending our time sticking red-hot knives into each other's backs'.

The conference ignored calls from both Archer and Bercow for unity in the run-up to the general election, and instead gave a sympathetic hearing to calls for the abolition of local authorities, council housing and rent controls; the privatisation of the BBC, British Rail, the Post Office and the CEGB.

Peter Clarke, Conservative candidate in East Lothian, said he admired the 'coherence and integrity' of the FCS's free-market libertarian policies. 'Everyone should be forced to be free', he said. ■

MacShane v. Mullin

Two ornaments of the left have had a rift — over a name. Denis MacShane, former NUJ President and now an official with the International Metalworkers, is taking the dimmest view of his name, in its unusual spelling, being that of the hero of The Last Man out of Saigon, *a new novel by Chris Mullin, former editor of* Tribune. *The hero is a CIA man masquerading as a journalist: the real MacShane is a real journalist and author for, among others,* Tribune *and the* Statesman *who is as close to the CIA as Mullin is to Neil Kinnock — or MI5, for that matter.*

MacShane spoke frostily to Mullin over last weekend: Mullin assured his old friend that it was the purest of coincidences. Macshane grumbles that he reviewed his first novel glowingly and suspects Freudian complexes, though not actual malice, and won't sue. But had, he wonders, the name been Pilger, would the distinguished former Mirror *reporter and editor-in-chief of the* News on Sunday *have been as forgiving? And should not, he muses, the feminist members of Sunderland South Labour Party, where Mullin is the candidate, not know with what close detail Mullin chronicles in his novel how Thai prostitutes in Bangkok use felt tip pens to welcome their clients?* ■

Me and my gal

Hot flushes all round chez Liberal MP Michael Meadowcroft. He's wont to hold committee meetings of the Leeds Liberals in his study; the room is tastefully littered with pictures of his girlfriend in various states of undress, causing hitherto untold agonies to the more puritan of his flock. ■

Collective platform

Fenner Brockway is 98 on 1 November: his autography, *98 Not Out*, is published by Quartet later this month. It contains, among much else, this fine definition of the ends of socialism which the left might like to reflect on as the germ of an answer to the right's capture of individualism: 'Socialists have been inclined to exaggerate the importance of collectivism over individualism. After all, our object is to provide every individual who is born with the opportunity to reach fulfillment physically, mentally and spiritually. Collectivism should be the platform for such development. The aim should be the development of the individual'. ■

Conduct unbecoming

LIKE inventors of human-powered aircraft and perpetual motion machines, Labour's National Executive Committee thinks that *this* time it has come up with a foolproof way of getting rid of members of Militant.

The NEC's annual report, published this week, proposes an addition to the party constitution: a 'National Constitutional Committee', to handle discipline. One of its major powers would be to adjudicate on charges of, effectively, 'bringing the party into disrepute'.

Its proposed formulation of the rule for such a charge is that 'no member of the Labour Party shall engage in a sustained course of conduct prejudicial to the party . . . where appropriate, the NCC shall have regard to involvement in financial support for and/or the organisation of and/or the activities of any organisation declared ineligible for affiliation to the party.' The main safeguard which the NEC includes is that 'the NCC shall not have regard to the mere holding or expression of beliefs and opinions.'

One of the prime movers behind the idea is Sheffield MP Richard Caborn. He's confident that it's workable: he modelled the proposal on the final appeal court mechanism of the engineering union AEU, of which he's a member. The Tribune Group considered it at the start of this year, and circulated it to other unions for comment — which was generally favourable. Larry Whitty, Labour's general secretary, also liked it, and it finally became accepted by the NEC.

Says Caborn: 'the way the rules are at the moment, the NEC is the judge, the jury and the bloody executioner'. The NEC hopes that by separating the functions and the membership, the possibility of successful legal challenge can be minimised. The membership of the NCC would be elected annually by the full conference in much the same manner as the NEC at the moment. Its decisions would be final (at present NEC expulsion decisions can be appealed against to the full conference). To some extent it would take power out of the hands of constituency parties: instead of being able to expel members who could then appeal to the NEC, they could only present a case to the NCC for it to consider.

However, David Blunkett succeeded in getting an amendment passed at an NEC organisation committee meeting on Monday afternoon, which required constituency parties actually to *recommend* disciplinary action.

Has the NEC correctly calculated the balance? It wants to be able to fight all legal actions at NCC level, where the party's chances of defeating Militant are better than in constituencies; but it needs to leave the constituencies with enough power to take their responsibilities seriously. Whatever happens, it will be a huge weight off the NEC's collective mind. According to Blunkett: 'The grinding deathwish of dealing with disciplinary matters in the NEC has actually bedevilled any kind of genuine political coming together.' ■

Brit Aid

Britain is doing well out of the Third World these days. Figures from Christian Aid this week show that, over the past year, British banks took a net £1.1bn from developing countries. At the same time, Government aid to the developing world has dropped by one third *since 1979, from 1.15 per cent of public expenditure in 1979 to 0.83 per cent now (from £1.1bn to £0.94bn, in constant prices). Voluntary agencies' share has been going up steadily — at £130m last year, it is around 11 per cent of official spending. Further, within official aid, a rising proportion has been on Aid Trade Provision, which assists UK companies in overseas bidding: programmes to help the neediest, who are dependent on subsistence agriculture, have been cut back very hard indeed. It's the other side to the flood of voluntary giving through Sportsaid and Bandaid: Martin Bax, CA's associate director, says: 'Even the amazing generosity of the British people can't make up for Government aid cuts and the growing burden of debt on the third world.'* ■

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As the election approaches, the Liberal/SDP Alliance prepares for the Dawn of the New Politics — in which it holds the balance in a hung parliament. But you can't keep a good old-fashioned power struggle down. Last year the Alliance could still claim plausibly to have defied the laws of political gravity. This year they're divided over defence, tax, housing, regional policy and a merger between the two parties. JOHN RENTOUL reports on the relations between the Two Davids, identifies the factions and what they're split over, and asks: do policy divisions signify a deeper clash of basic political values?

DIVIDED THEY STALL

'OH DAVID', breathes David Steel adoringly, in *Spitting Image*'s cruellest satire, as the Liberal leader snuggles up to David Owen's chunky-knit breast.

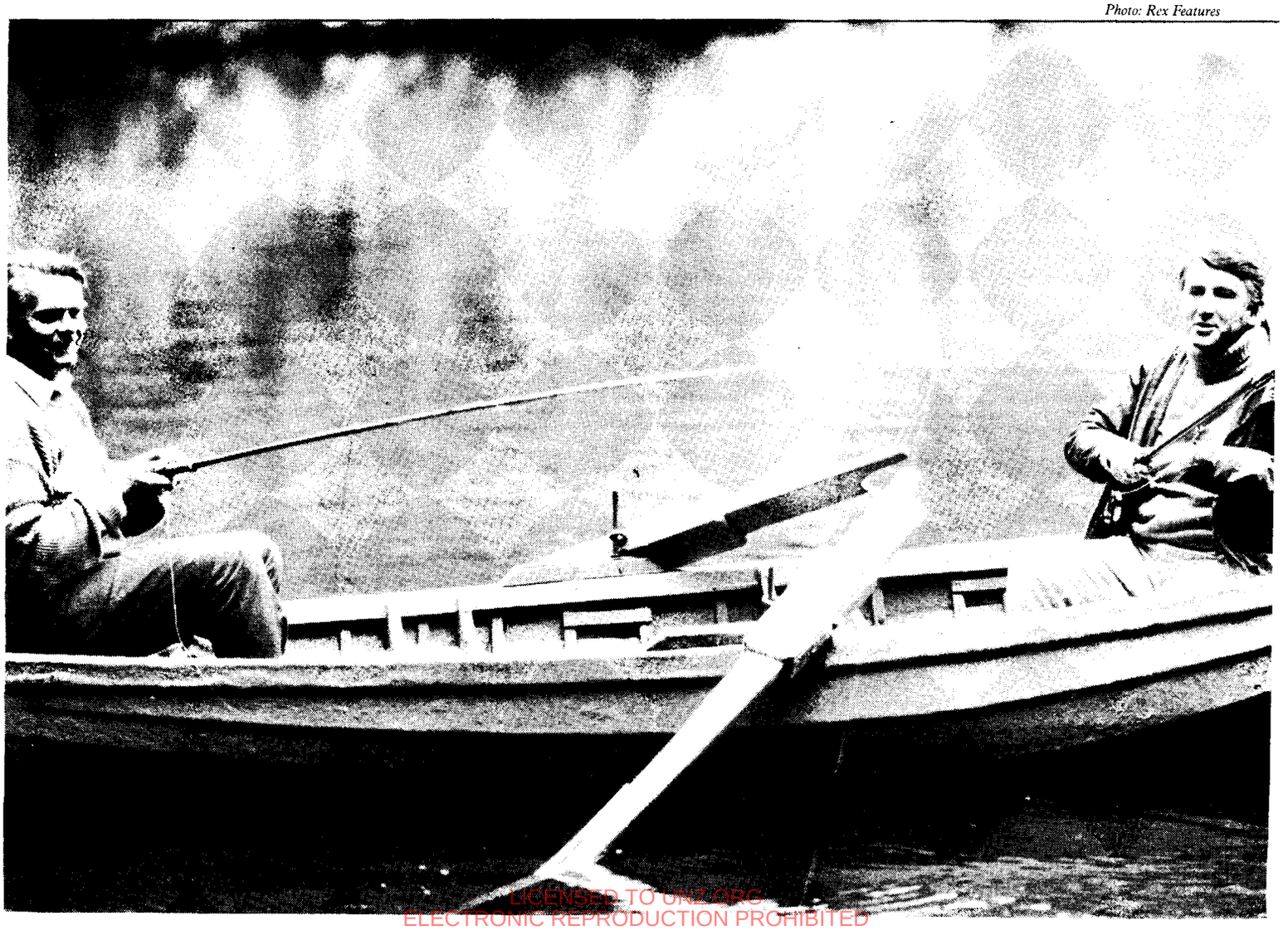
It is, says Liberal frontbencher Paddy Ashdown, a 'genuine travesty'. No one doubts SDP leader David Owen's ability to win an argument by sheer force of personality and debating skill. Certainly no one on the SDP's National Committee, where Owen would be in a minority on a 'free vote' on such issues as joint selection of parliamentary candidates last year and now defence — where he has, so far, got his way.

But David Steel has a longer horizon, a more flexible approach and wins by attrition. He is Bjorn Borg to Owen's McEnroe. The defence issue is a good example. Owen stamped his foot and won concessions from the Liberals. But in doing so he split his own party, and Steel's patient work behind the scenes has isolated him on defence policy to such an extent that he can now only back down or threaten the very future of the Alliance.

Defence is the fissile issue. The SDP is in open revolt in the run-up to Assembly, with Owen opposed on his defence stance by almost all the 'Great and the Good' in the party including the Gang of Four's other three — Roy Jenkins (who has a rooted dislike of Owen), Bill Rodgers and Shirley Williams.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS. You either want them or you don't. Or you're at Harrogate on ▷

Photo: Rex Features



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Sunday debating the finer points of in between. Some of those points are pretty fine. The difference between Owen and everyone else in the leadership of the SDP and Liberals is presented as 'we will replace Polaris unless peace talks go well' *versus* 'we won't replace Polaris unless peace talks go badly'. Not really a problem, you might think. But what's left out is the question of *when* a decision to replace Polaris (or not) is to be taken.

Defence policy — as Labour found to its cost in 1983 — can be a central electoral issue. It may not be a vote-winner if you get it right, but it's *certainly* a vote-loser if you get it wrong. So why is the Alliance — now of all times — split on it? And why over a crack invisible to the naked eye?

The answer is: David Owen. The split is important not for the distinction between 'I must' and 'we will if we must' replace Polaris, Britain's ageing submarine-launched nuclear missiles, but for what it signifies about Owen's political style. The SDP has found that creating the New Politics throws up old conflicts.

First strike was from Roger Liddle, candidate in the Fulham by-election, in the *New Statesman* (15 August); he sharply criticised Owen's stance on defence, and his willingness to keep his options open towards the Tories while closing doors to the left, which is where most of the Liberal party now lies.

The anti-missile missile went up from Ealing SDP, whose Owenite chair Roger Fox named Owen's opponents on the party's National Committee in a letter replying to Liddle (*New Statesman*, 29 August). It was a roll-call of the Great and the Good, and an unusually public listing by faction: Bill Rodgers, SDP vice-president, Roger Liddle, Celia Goodhart, rabbi Julia Neuberger, Dick Taverne, the original SDP prototype who won the Lincoln by-election as Democratic Labour in 1973, David Marquand, the history professor and Labour MP 1966-77, 'and a few others', who might include Michael Hancock MP, the victor of the Portsmouth South by-election in 1984, and business persons Clive Lindley and Chris Muir.

The hidden significance of Fox's letter is that a new National Committee is about to be elected. This public electioneering against the 'anti-Owen' faction is precisely the sort of yah-boo-sucks infighting which made many SDP members leave the Labour Party.

The tilt to Labour

Liddle's anxiety about Owen's stance on defence making his tilt to the Tories irreversible catches a shift of opinion among Alliance supporters. An *Economist*/MORI poll carried out in mid-August showed a 5.5 per cent swing over the month to Labour as the party Alliance voters think should be allowed to lead a new government in a hung parliament. Of those who said they would vote for the Alliance, 37 per cent said they'd prefer Lib/SDP MPs to put Neil Kinnock in Downing Street, as against 26 per cent for Mrs Thatcher or her successor (24 per cent said 'neither' and 14 per cent said 'don't know'). Liberal supporters favour Labour by a two-to-one majority, whereas social democrats are evenly divided.

On the other hand, 'it was over defence that I left the Labour party' recurs again and again in SDP conversations: the adoption by Labour of one-sided nuclear disarmament created the SDP. For Liddle, it seems to be, now that Neil Kinnock has hauled the Labour party back from the brink of 'extremism', again the only issue of substance between him and the Labour party; but Owen has moved on, and rethought everything else too.

That's the background. But what's the defence debate actually *about*? The SDP Assembly will have before it an 'official'

Where do they stand?

LUMBERING through the SDP and then the Liberal Assembly the following week will be a monster document called 'Partnership for Progress', which draws together, updates and summarises joint Alliance policy — on everything. It claims to be a statement of political philosophy which 'provides the foundations' on which the joint Alliance manifesto will be based.

But is there such a thing as a coherent Alliance philosophy? As Fulham SDP candidate Roger Liddle pointed out in these pages last month, the Alliance project of replacing Labour as the main left-of-centre party in Britain has failed. And as Professor David Marquand, member of the SDP National Committee, told us, 'it may turn out that history will say the formation of the SDP saved the Labour Party, not killed it.'

Does this, and the Alliance's rediscovery of Europe — in the context of a defence policy fudge — mean that the Alliance is now Britain's Christian Democratic party? How can the statist, centralist, top-down approach of Labour retreads be reconciled with the individualist, devolved, bottom-up approach of Liberal Focus teams, priming the parish pump? We spoke to Margaret Clay and Bill Rodgers.

'Partnership for Progress'

('The Alliance approach to the challenges of the 1990s')

'The Alliance represents the coming together of the two major reforming traditions in British politics. Our Alliance is a synthesis of the belief in individual freedom, pluralism and diversity with the values of social reform and justice. Liberalism's contribution to Britain's history and the ideas for which it has always stood are individual rights, democratic institutions and the rule of law. The modern Liberal Party opposes excessive concentrations of power, whether in the hands of the state, large corporations, unions, or others. Social Democratic principles are complementary, [drawing] on the European tradition of social democracy in recognising that political, social and economic power are interdependent. Social Democrats believe that government action is needed to stop private institutions in a market economy acquiring excessive power *vis-a-vis* consumers and employees.'

Margaret Clay

General Secretary of the Association of Liberal Councillors

'Political philosophies arise out of people working together — you can't stitch them together in committee. Liberalism has a profoundly different dimension on power in society, on devolution and decentralisation. At the grassroots the Liberals and the SDP are coming together, but the process of creating a coherent philosophy could take five or ten years or more.'

Bill Rodgers

SDP Vice-President, one of the original Gang of Four

'The Alliance stands in the centre of the left in conventional terms, and I believe that our aim is still to replace the Labour Party as the main opposition to the Tories. Not to replace the whole of the Labour Party; we are trying to replace two-thirds of the ground the Labour Party stands on, leaving a third to the left. But the reality is that we are looking for Tory votes this time round and are more likely to do a deal with the Tories than Labour after the election. The Alliance has a pretty coherent philosophy . . . no, I don't actually think it's a philosophy, that's too grand a word. The Alliance is a coalition, but the gap between Neil Kinnock and the hard left is far, far greater than the gap between 99 per cent of the SDP and 95 per cent of the Liberals.'

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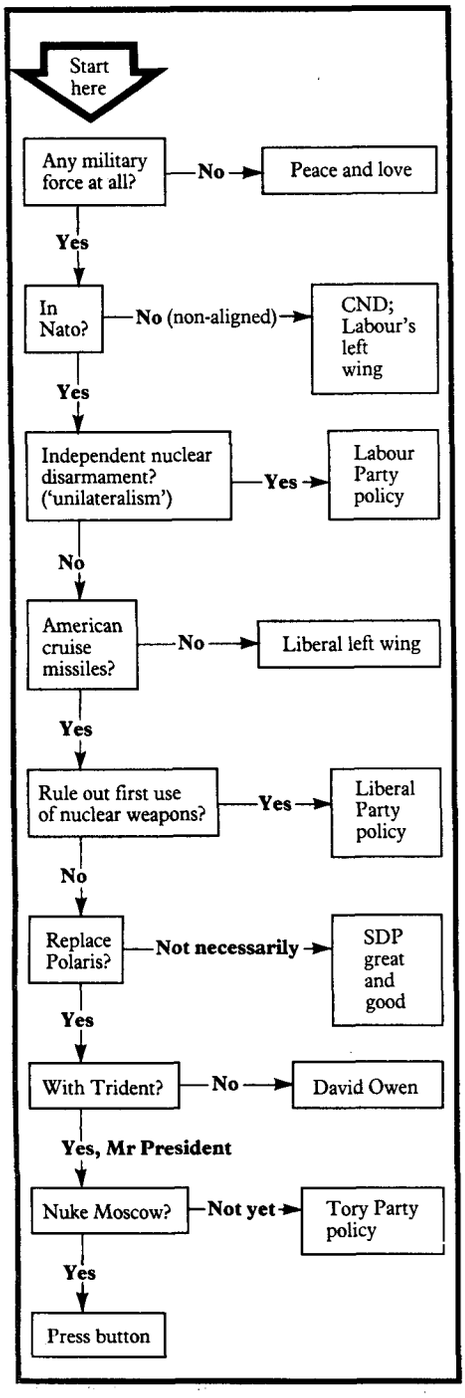
The *NS* Instant Guide to Defence Policy



motion on defence, drafted by the policy committee. It:

- 'welcomes' the report of the Joint Alliance Commission, which David Owen originally refused to 'endorse' because it doesn't commit the Alliance to replacing Polaris
- reaffirms existing SDP policy — so that Owen and the rest of the Gang of Four can go on arguing in private what *that* is
- calls for an 'investigation of the practicability' of a Euro-deterrent (the new element of the compromise), which is what Owen and Steel have been chatting to President Mitterrand about.

The Assembly also has before it the 'Marquand motion' to endorse the Joint Commission report. Technically in the name of an Edinburgh member, John Bancroft, National Committee member David Marquand has signalled his intention to speak on it. It's been suggested, behind the scenes, that David Owen could easily live with the word 'endorse', because the Joint Commission report is so ambiguous.

A designer gauntlet

The exact form of words that is or is not arrived at at Harrogate on Sunday matters less, however, than Owen's *tone*. This will make or break the Alliance's image over the conference season, not just because he could antagonise his members, but because there will be a direct knock-on effect at the Liberal Assembly the following week.

On the National Committee, and in the wider party, Owen's position as leader is so strong that he can always win by laying his authority on the line. But though this can work with David Steel — because Steel won't risk a public falling-out with his more forceful partner — Owen can't carry the membership of the Liberal Party with him in this way. The Liberal activist layer already feels David Steel has conceded too much on defence.

Here is Owen's enemy within. Owen's dilemma is that he realises the need to be flexible, but doesn't want to undermine his sub-Thatcherite 'conviction politics' image. So he has to appear tough on television and tender to SDP and Liberal opponents, while at the same time forging a joint Alliance defence policy that is robust enough to stand up to scrutiny during a general election campaign; and he's convinced that can't include uncertainty about the timing and the conditions of the Polaris replacement decision.

Meanwhile the Liberal grassroots, organised under the banner of the Association of Liberal Councillors (ALC), are now thoroughly alarmed by the drift of SDP policy on all fronts. It's not just defence. There are large gaps between the SDP's policy-writers at Cowley Street HQ in London and grassroots Liberal thinking on almost all areas of policy — because of a fundamentally different approach to politics.

Last week's SDP paper on housing policy is described by Liberal activists as 'diabolical'. Housing is an emotive issue for Alliance councillors, who are involved in running 44 local councils. The SDP plan is for extra spending on new houses to be diverted from local councils to housing associations and co-ops, and in effect, says one ALC critic, to 'make council tenants subsidise the rates' while home-owners go on getting a huge tax subsidy on their mortgages (although the extra subsidy to higher-rate taxpayers is to be ended).

THE WAYWARDNESS of SDP policy-making was exposed by the fiasco over tax policy. A new plan to combine the tax and benefits systems was proudly unveiled by tax specialist Dick Taverne (founder of the Institute for Fiscal Studies) two weeks ago. At the press conference it became clear that some families earning more than £10,000 a year would be worse off. Last week David Owen appeared with a chastened Taverne to say the plan was 'merely for discussion'. This is not true: a discussion paper ('Fairness and Enterprise') was issued last October. This latest document is described as a policy statement.

Liberals, including David Steel, are unhappy with the SDP's incompetence, but on a number of other issues, such as industrial relations and regional policy, and the national SDP's relative lack of interest in youth and

Admuddle

IF POLITICS is about presentation, then the Alliance continues to show itself politically inept. There's no immediate end in sight to the writhings over who should advertise the two parties at the next election that we charted last month ('The War of the Agencies' *NS* 22 August).

The parties are going down the road they took ad agency Gold Greenlees Trott in 1983 to disastrous effect. The SDP is keen on employing an agency to handle the Alliance account, fired by the enthusiasm of party chair Dick Newby (left) and MP Ian Wrigglesworth (right). But the Liberals, in particular *eminence grise* Richard Holme and secretary general Andy Ellis, have their doubts; they're worried that the Alliance can't match the two main parties' huge ad budgets, and should therefore concentrate on local campaigning.

Last time the SDP resolved the row by employing Gold Greenlees Trott for themselves, going over the Liberals' heads and ensuring confusion. This time, while Liberals maintain that no decision has been taken on whether to employ an agency, the SDP has drawn up a shortlist of three — Abbott Meed Vickers, Still Price, and Delaney Fletcher Delaney (though SDP chair Dick Newby was quick to stress that other agencies applied for the account, as soon as the *NS* revealed who was on the shortlist). And last week it was Newby that

vetted the agencies' presentations, with no Liberals present. Again it's the SDP making the running by employing Simon Lewis from public relations agency Shandwicks to beef up their press office and write the leader's speeches at a salary of £15,000.

It's likely that an agency will eventually be employed jointly by the Alliance, but those agencies applying for the account are unhappy with both the confusion surrounding their prospective employment and the strategy favoured by the politicians. Learning from the GLC campaign which appealed to all voters, the *agencies* want a series of unifying campaigns on the lines of John Cleese's party political broadcast on proportional representation, lifting the campaign out of the trough of party politics. The *politicians* want to stress the very Alliance virtues of the two Davids, and consensus. But they'd better agree among themselves how to do it, and quickly.

Patrick Forbes

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Green politics, there are differences of more substance. At Liberal Assembly the ALC is likely to try to remit 'Partnership for Progress', the Alliance's joint policy-cum-philosophical statement (see box on p.6). The ALC doesn't like much of the document, but nevertheless doesn't want to throw the whole thing out, because the Liberal party (as opposed to the Liberal leader) would then lose control of the Alliance's election manifesto, which is supposed to be based on it. Last year Liberal Assembly agreed that the party's 'Standing Committee' (the main policy body) would be responsible for reaching agreement on the manifesto with the SDP — unlike the 1983 manifesto, which was cobbled together by the respective leaders of the Alliance, David Steel and Roy Jenkins.

According to the ALC, local SDP councillors, candidates and members are closer to the Liberals with whom they work than the national figures at Cowley Street. What is certainly true is that SDP councillors work well with Liberals, despite being heavily outnumbered. Like joint selection and Labour's reselection process, this is an example of the dog that didn't bark, or even snap at the heels of party unity.

What's more, on hung councils, local politicians have acted out in full dress rehearsal all the possible scenes from a possible forthcoming attraction, *The Hung Parliament* (a Restoration comedy). To them, the obsession of national Alliance figures with 'keeping options open', 'everything being up for grabs' and 'you've got to trust us' is puzzling.

On hung councils, Liberal/SDP Groups have been most successful when they have had clear objectives set out in advance. Similarly, they know that if no one party has an overall majority, then all three parties are equally powerful, no matter what their size (and some of them are familiar with the special sub-plots of four-or-more-party systems). Having surprised themselves with their success in winning concessions from the 'old' parties, council activists don't want to be sold short by Owen and Steel.

But there's one crucial difference between hung councils and a hung parliament: local elections occur at fixed intervals — between which some kind of deal has to be reached — whereas the House of Commons can be dissolved and a new election called. This adds an edge to the pushing and shoving to get in the taxi to the Palace, with the Queen playing an unrehearsed role.

At Liberal Assembly, an ALC motion requires wheeling and dealing in a hung parliament to be done by an elected group of Alliance MPs. It will be difficult for David Steel to oppose it, as he has already conceded the principle of Liberal MPs electing their own chief whip (David Alton will be submitting himself for election next month).

It may be that this manoeuvring is more important than splits over policy. The defence row appears to have had a small effect on the Alliance's opinion poll rating, but what will really decide the next election — unless the Alliance gets over about 41 per cent of the poll — is the balance between Tory and Labour votes. □

A Liberal samizdat?

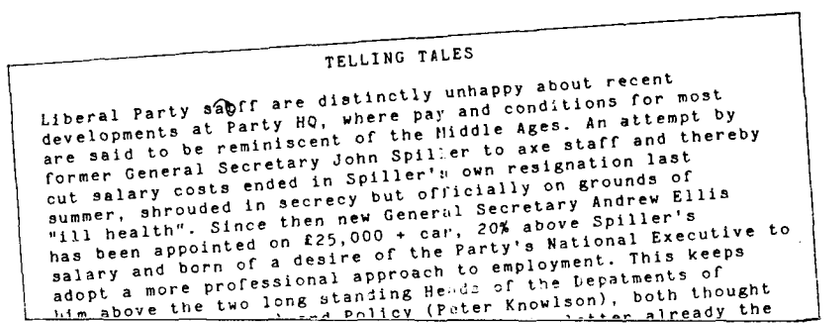
THE LIBERAL party is justly famed for its electoral dirty tricks. Now, for once, it is more sinned against than sinning. The *New Statesman* has received an anonymous brown envelope, containing a single typed sheet. Headed 'Telling Tales', it purports to be the inside story of what life is really like at Liberal Party HQ, painting a picture of an embittered staff locked in obscure, internecine political battles while enjoying 'pay and conditions reminiscent of the Middle Ages'.

It alleges that:

- Former party secretary general John Spiller had been forced to retire, a victim of his own cost cutting campaign, not his ill health — the official explanation.
- Party policy chief Peter Knowlson was the subject of a plot to get rid of him — and that he and finance chief Dee Doocey do 'little for their £18,000 p.a.'
- Staff morale is low — they are 'incensed with the growing disparity between the higher and the lower paid', particular ire is focused on the appointment of Andy Ellis at £25,000 pa plus car as the new secretary general — and Area Agents had only just secured a guarantee that expenses unpaid for 18 months would be paid.

If true, all this would be meat and drink to a left-wing periodical. Unfortunately 'Telling Tales' rarely rises above the level of informed gossip. Most of the facts are correct, but practically none of the interpretations placed upon them: it would seem the work of an insider embittered by the financial misfortune attendant on working for the Liberal Party.

- Ex secretary general Spiller indeed carried out a cost-cutting campaign at HQ. But his ill-health was genuine.
- There is a proposal to move the policy department from the party offices to the Commons and this would involve the creation of a new research post. But the move is unlikely to happen; there is little available space at Westminster, and no money spare. Knowlson, though eccentric, is a hard worker, as is Doocey, and Knowlson's the likely occupant of any new post; rumours of a plot came after the move was mooted, not before.
- Staff morale at Westminister and elsewhere is remarkably high. The meeting at which Area Agents were supposed to have secured their guarantee was in fact given over to discussing liaison arrangements with the Association of Liberal Councillors. Certainly salaries are low but, perhaps unwisely, Liberals are excited at the prospect of holding the balance of power at the next election.



TELLING TALES

Liberal Party staff are distinctly unhappy about recent developments at Party HQ, where pay and conditions for most are said to be reminiscent of the Middle Ages. An attempt by former General Secretary John Spiller to axe staff and thereby cut salary costs ended in Spiller's own resignation last summer, shrouded in secrecy but officially on grounds of "ill health". Since then new General Secretary Andrew Ellis has been appointed on £25,000 + car, 20% above Spiller's salary and born of a desire of the Party's National Executive to adopt a more professional approach to employment. This keeps him above the two long standing Heads of the Depatments of [illegible] Policy (Peter Knowlson), both thought [illegible] already the

The Liberal 'E' team

'E' STANDS for election, rather than 'A' for action. While Liberal obscurantism may be holding up the advertising fracas, they have at least got their house in order when it comes to choosing the 'who' of general election campaigning.

The following five names will form the kernel of the Liberals' general election campaign. To some extent they're self-selected because they are not standing for parliament, and thus won't disappear into the country in the last and most vital days. However, it remains doubtful how much of an impact they can make on a budget (£720,000) that is a fraction of the major parties, and without a clearly definable (as yet) election winning strategy.

Des Wilson. Incoming Party President, and hot tip to chair the Party's General Election Committee. A veteran campaigner — Shelter, Friends of the Earth, Freedom of Information — Wilson brings both experience and volcanic enthusiasm to the party. But it is doubtful that these qualities will suffice to paper over the Alliance's presentational cracks. While the launch of the recent Politics and People document showed both him and the Alliance at their media-alluring best, it was immediately followed by the row over the SDP's social welfare proposals which showed the parties at their fissiparous worst.

Tim Clement Jones. A successful barrister, Clement Jones is the incoming chair of the Liberal executive. He's allied with the left of the party, and will be Wilson's rival for the chair of the General Election Committee.

Andy Ellis. Newly appointed Secretary General, Ellis's by-election sorcery, and lackadaisical personal hygiene are a legend in British politics. His dirty tricks campaign at Brecon (leaflets pointing out that the Liberal candidate had a 'family' life) lifted him to national prominence, while earning him further cross party ordure — Tory MP Hal Miller: 'Ellis? he's the biggest ——— unhung'.

Simon Bryson. Recently selected to be Ellis's deputy at the meagre salary of £20,000 p.a., Bryson is a product of student union politics at both Durham University and the LSE. While Ellis is charged with day-to-day targeting, Bryson has the more onerous task of plotting long-term strategy. He faces two problems: the traditional split between the party's radical wing, the Association of Liberal Councillors, who favour a much more radical campaign style (epitomised by Ellis) than do the stodgy Parliamentarians and the suspicions at Party HQ about his lack of experience.

Paul Tyler. Outgoing Party Chair, Tyler has made surprisingly little impact on the advertising row, inspite of his real life job as managing director of PR firm *Good Relations Public Affairs*. Some senior Liberals would see this as symptomatic of his term of office; though personally pleasant, he's been dubbed 'uninspiring' by the party faithful.

Patrick Forbes

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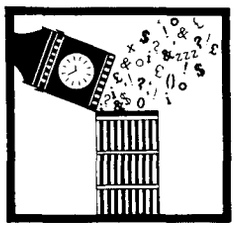

Remember, remember the fifth of November

I WAS FISHING around in the wastepaper baskets at 10 Downing Street the other day, disguised as a best-selling novelist and failed Tory MP, when I came across a memorandum Mrs Thatcher had received from John Wakeham, the government's chief whip. At least, that's what it looked like, although I cannot guarantee its authenticity. This is what it said.

'Prime Minister,
Thank you for your briefing ahead of the reshuffle. What a good idea to promote David Mellor, and to move Chris Patten to Overseas Development. They have little sympathy with your political thinking, but they come across well on television. If enough voters can be persuaded that they will be as compassionate in practice as they sound in the studio, we ought to pick up some extra votes at the next election.

It's important, however, to keep the reshuffle in perspective. It should help us improve the presentation of government policies, but that is all. I know that you, Willie and Norman say the government's poor opinion poll ratings are the result of poor presentation. All governments say the same when they run into difficulties: I see that Bernard took this line when he briefed the lobby on the reshuffle.

In truth, the presentation theory of government popularity is largely nonsense. Our standing in the polls is not affected fundamentally by the choice of middle-ranking ministers at the Foreign Office or the Department of Transport.

Our real problem is you. Ever since you became Prime Minister, you have acted as if the Tory party depended on your popularity to keep public support. You assumed that the "Thatcher factor" would always be an asset. I have news for you. This summer, for the first time, the polls are providing clear evidence that you are turning into a liability.

MORI's monthly series show most clearly what has been happening. Gallup's figures have fluctuated more, but their underlying trend tells the same story. Each month both polling organisations measure voting intention. They also record the satisfaction ratings of the party leaders. For most of the last seven years you have been ahead of the party: that is, more people have been satisfied with your performance as Prime Minister than say they would vote Tory. That has now changed, as you can see from the following table, published in the latest issue of MORI's monthly newsletter, *British Public Opinion**:

	(a) Thatcher satisfaction rating	(b) Conservative support	(a) minus (b) "Thatcher factor"
	%	%	%
July 1985	38	33	+5
October 1985	39	37	+2
January 1986	34	33	+1
April 1986	32	34	-2
July 1986	30	36	-6
August 1986	27	37	-10

No trend is immutable. Your rating may recover. (It is only two points higher than its lowest-ever figure, in December 1981). But you need to heed what has happened since last summer. Conservative support has meandered along, never far from the mid-30s, while the proportion satisfied with your performance has slipped by a dozen points. You are no longer pulling the party up in public esteem; if we are not careful you might start dragging it down.

PETER KELLNER

If that happens, your position will become difficult. Julian Critchley said to me the other day: "I can assure you, John, that I plan to do my best to help us win the next election under our glorious leader, *whoever he might be*". I know Julian is one of your least favourite backbenchers, and he speaks for nobody but himself. But that kind of mood could catch on.

HOW LONG HAVE you got to put your image right? That depends on the date of the next election. In theory you could call an election any time between now and June 1988. In practice, you will want to dissolve Parliament when you think you can win.

Norman has been telling the troops to be ready for next June. Very wise. Everybody needs to be prepared in case next May's council elections show that we are recovering well. But chatting to our backbenchers as they return from the Dordogne and the Greek islands, I find that they think next autumn is the likeliest time.

Their thinking goes like this. The British economy is going through a sticky patch, and unemployment has been rising when we hoped it would start to fall. It may take until next summer for a more favourable trend to establish itself — and for decisions to increase public spending to show up on the ground in schools, hospitals and so on. By the autumn wavering Tories will be in a mood to vote for us once again. According to this theory, June will be too soon, and '88 will be too late. It has to be October.

If that is also how your mind is working, take care. October may be a traditional general election month; but next year you would jeopardise our prospects if you called it then. You will see why if you look at these conference dates:

SDP: 1-4 September
TUC: 7-11 September
Liberals: 13-18 September
Labour: 28 September-2 October
Conservative: 6-9 October

An October election risks at least one Alliance party and the TUC attracting huge amounts of favourable publicity for our opponents, while denying us the chance to do the same, for their conferences would take place while ours would not. It would be just possible to announce in late August that the election will be held on 1 October. That would force the Alliance parties to scrap their conferences; but the TUC would still go ahead, with the risk that trade union leaders would project themselves as decent, moderate, democratic patriots. We wouldn't want that impression to take root, would we?

A September election would cause the same problem — indeed more so, since it would mean a TUC conference in mid-campaign. Just one thing weighs in favour of September. It does not get dark until after 7pm. By the beginning of November, summer time is over and the evenings are drawing in: sunset is around 4.30. We might be accused of calling the election at a time when some people would be deterred from voting.

On the other hand, evidence from the 1983 Harris/ITN exit poll suggests that early evening voters are slightly less Tory and more Alliance-inclined than daytime and mid-evening voters — so if there is a deterrent effect, it may help us.

In one respect, November offers us a clear advantage. As ours is the last conference, we would be able to start the campaign directly following a free week-long advert for the virtues of today's Tory party. Suppose you see the Queen on the Monday after the end of our conference. The earliest election date would be three-and-a-half weeks later. That would take us to Thursday, the fifth of November.

There are some fainthearts on our side who might regard that as, well, *unfortunate*. They seem to think that effigies on bonfires might suddenly be dressed in skirts. But as long as you are prepared to ride such ridicule, 5 November does seem to be our best date.' □

*Available from MORI, 32 Old Queen Street, London SW1; £50 per annum.

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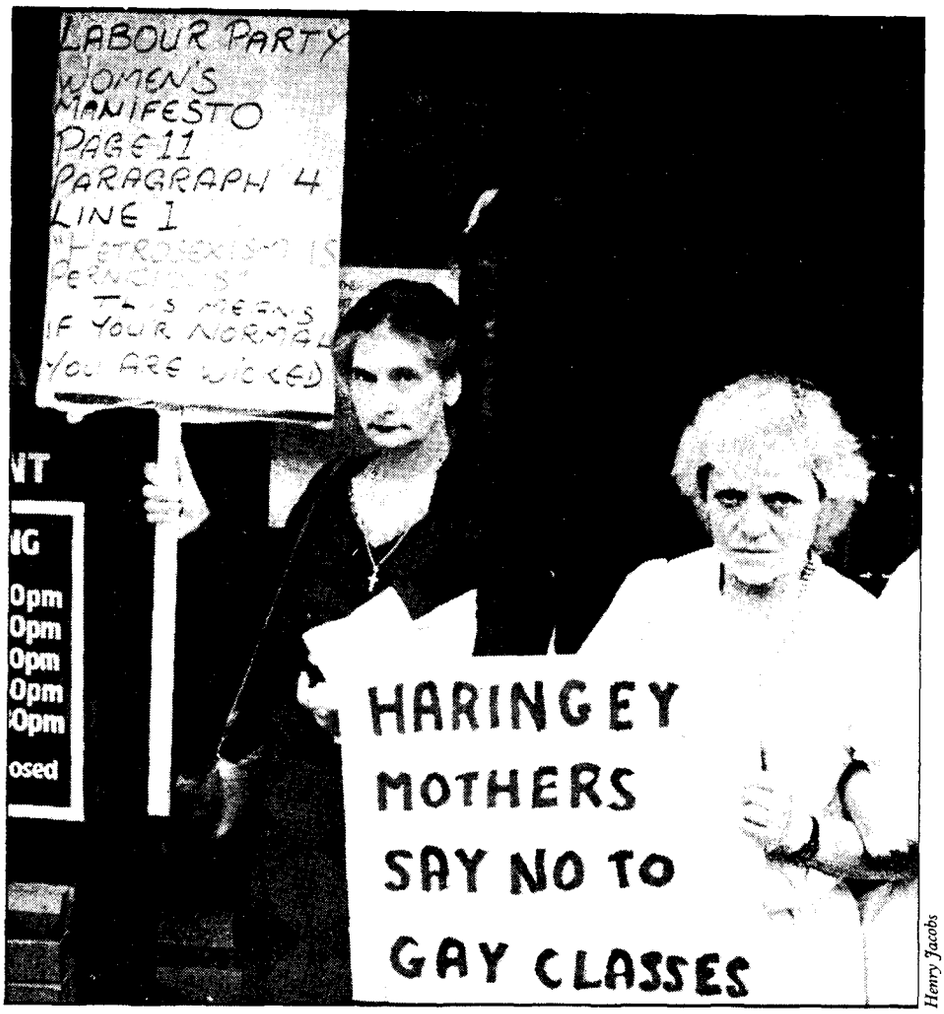

Henry Jacobs

ANYONE FOR 'POST-PTOLEMAIC' SEXUALITY?

Nowhere has the present 'trick', by Tory rebels and Opposition alike, of using the Lords to outwit the government's Commons majority been more onerously felt by Mrs Thatcher's business managers than over the Education Bill.

Introduced in the Lords on 19 February as an 'uncontroversial measure' (thought the Department of Education and Science) to improve teaching quality and give parents a greater say, it has successively been used by the right to try to enforce policing of free speech on campus, by Labour (famous victory) to reduce corporal punishment, and again by the right (20 May onwards) to legislate on sex education.

The Bill returns for a last day in the Commons on 21 October. Sex education will again be the inflammatory issue as backbench Tories continue to defy their leaders by trying to insert a clause that would allow parents to withdraw their children from sex education wherever it might arise in the curriculum. Time and again, the stated fear is of 'positive images' of homosexuality. ANDREW LUMSDEN and DENIS CAMPBELL have some proposals to make . . .

IT ISN'T CONVENTIONAL to begin with a recommendation, but here's one:

- Preparation of children (five to 16) for life as sexual beings among *other* sexual beings ('sex education') should be built around the largely ignored and downward-drifting history curriculum — which might help, and this is not a frivolous point, to *revive* history studies in schools. Half of all children today, it's estimated, learn no history after the age of 14*. An urgent practical exercise would follow if any consensus about this approach emerged among headteachers, on whom — and not on the government or, until this year's creeping interventions, on the legislature — is laid the obligation of formulating sex education policy school by school in the closest co-operation with interested parents;
- Teacher-training would have to be overhauled. The past century's massive body of work on evolving human ideas about its own sexuality is nowhere formally reflected in the education of educators. New classroom materials would be required from educational publishers. These would have to be most carefully prepared to avoid indoctrination, whether religious or secular, so that classroom and 'pastoral' discussion of sexual issues would be better grounded in *facts* — supposed *sine qua non* of a good education.

Opportunities to put this line of thought to the authorities lie ready to hand as it happens, and public intervention in the debate doesn't have to be confined to the brief Parliamentary time left for the Education Bill. There are two official discussion papers on the table: the Schools Inspectorate's *Health Education from 5 to 16*** published 30 June, and the Department of Education & Science's *Sex Education at School*, released 6 August. The latter invites comment by local authorities, teacher associations, churches and 'others' no later than 1 November. A report for Scottish schools is being separately prepared by their own Consultative Committee on the Curriculum.

Both papers pursue further the March 1985 White Paper *Better Schools* (Cmnd 9469) which called for sex education to be in 'a moral framework'. There are differences of emphasis between the Inspectorate and DES papers (the Inspectorate is a shade more 'liberal') but they can be summarised as agreeing that topics distasteful to many a parent (contraception, abortion, sexually transmitted diseases, homosexuality) 'are brought to pupils' attention inside and outside school'; 'physical' aspects of sexual behaviour mustn't be dealt with in isolation; parents must be informed, and their views mustn't be contradicted in any classroom 'confrontation'; the law, whether on contraception or homosexuality, must be made clear; each school should 'have a policy'.

Most improperly, since the Education Bill 1986 hasn't finished its progress through both Houses let alone received the royal assent, the DES paper also stresses that the Education Act *(sic)* 1986 requires that pupils be encouraged 'to have due regard to moral considerations and the value of family life'. It was this clause which swept a 'sex education' row already

*Historical Association survey entered in House of Lords record 13 January 1986.
**Curriculum Matters 6, HMSO 1986.

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simmering at local authority level *(see below)* up into an Education Bill which was never originally proposing to deal with the subject. On 20 May, during report stage in the Lords, Lord Buckmaster, a 'very churchy' cross-bencher with a real record of concern about children, introduced the theme of sex education with an amendment to enforce 'affirmation of moral and family values' on schools.

Neither the DES nor teachers — 'it's folly for central or local government to prescribe content in this sensitive area', Michael Duffy, Northumberland headteacher and incoming president of the Secondary Heads Association, said this 20 August — were pleased. It's a ground-rule, for very evident reasons, that parties in government don't legislate on the curriculum. The ministerial dilemma however (it's Labour's dilemma too) is that practical Front Bench politicians can't *oppose* 'morality' and 'the family', however loaded the terms. On 2 June the DES capitulated and substituted its own amendment for Buckmaster's. Careful reading shows that though it didn't drop the substance of Buckmaster's clause, the DES re-write is so 'loose', and must consciously have been so in defence of the profession, that to bring a successful prosecution against a headteacher for being in breach would be next-to-impossible. By late July, Tory backbenchers, spotting this, came up with their further amendment to remove children from sex education if there were fear of 'moral pollution'.

What pollution? A glance at the timing of Buckmaster's eruption on 20 May proves what everyone knows anyway, that out of the entire agenda relevant to questions that pupils might come up with in school, it's what should or shouldn't be said to them about homosexuality which precipitates outburst after outburst. May was local councils election month; and the month of the first direct elections to the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA), one of the largest two education authorities in the country. On election day (8 May) *The Times* — possibly editorialising in response to a *London Labour Briefing* piece saying that even Livingstone's GLC era had 'failed satisfactorily to address disadvantage and discrimination on grounds of class and sexual orientation' — spoke up for 'those [parents] who do not want equal-value indoctrination on homosexuality and against "heterosexism" *to which their children are increasingly subject'* (our emphasis).

ILEA's Labour group increased its majority nonetheless. Ealing and Haringey, two of the many local Labour parties with 'positive' manifesto policies on behalf of lesbians and gays, respectively *won* a majority and *increased* their majority. Within weeks (June in the case of Ealing, July in the case of Haringey) local politicians and local media, soaring to national media and national commentators, were embroiled in rows about council plans to 'encourage homosexuality' (right-wing phrasing) in schools. Poll results — democracy, you could say — had raised the level of conservative apprehension: further reason for Tories to seek a law to hold their children back from school.

Education v 'moral' values

The DES and the Schools Inspectorate in their discussion papers have relatively little to say of homosexuality and what there is isn't especially adversarial — another grievance just now to the 'moral right'. Both papers consent that the subject can't invariably be crushed under silence or unrelieved homilies. The Inspectorate goes so far as to recommend of homosexality (under 'problem' topics) that it should be discussed in schools 'objectively'.

We submit, though — resuming the theme with which we began, that 'sex education' should be focused in and constructed around the *history* curriculum — that these efforts by England and Wales' most influential educational 'guiding' authorities are wholly inadequate to cope either with the political row or with the dire failings of existing sex education as a whole *(see box overleaf)*. The reason is that neither DES nor Inspectorate offers any route out of the dilemma that if parents are *not* to be allowed to take their children in and out of school like yo-yos then there has to be some more genuinely informative basis on which to teach sexuality: an *education*. By this yardstick their papers should be sent back marked — frankly — illiterate.

We'd better make out our own case. It isn't true that, aside from certain facts as to reproduction or grudging admissions as to the

Lords & Commons refresher course

Autumn Term exams: Heterosexism

Successful candidates in the renewed Education debate on 21 October, will be fluent in the following:

Homosexuality and heterosexuality haven't always been with us — the words, that is. Invented in 1869 by the Hungarian Benkert as part of the 19th century explosion in taxonomy (or classification), especially biological and botanical. The words

- Helped clear the ground for thinking, as most people conversationally do today, in terms of two streams of erotic attraction (heterosexual and homosexual) reflected in every culture and society, class and race (bisexuals propose a third, or 'unity')
- Helped to formulate the now-conventional idea (or observation) that some people *are* homosexual (a state of being). This in sharp distinction from an earlier supposition, superlatively formulated in the West by Aquinas (13th century) and carried into the criminal law, that we're all the same, only some of us 'pervert' that identical nature by wilfully committing homosexual *acts*
- Helped create the vocabulary for factual enquiry into human sexuality, leading ultimately to the Kinsey (1948-53) and Hite (1977) reports and estimates that 4-10 per cent of people grow up to be exclusively homosexual; and that perhaps 30 per cent have had 'experiences'. It's easily forgotten now that poor science affected theology: *eg* an assumption that only the man's seed is 'life', the woman (nothing being known of her eggs) being 'mere' receptacle or incubator for the sacred male semen
- Proved so useful that 'homosexual' overtook the educated neutral usage 'invert' (itself a 19th century concept) in Britain and America from about the mid-20s; at which time also the pejorative contraction 'homo' entered common usage (*Partridge*)
- Homosexuals themselves, having successively welcomed 'invert' and then 'homosexual' as improvements on 'sodomite' and 'bugger' (both terms mainly derived from medieval Church/State gang wars with 'heretics') — improvements also on 'Sapphic' and 'queer' — rejected 'homosexual' as preferred primary self-description in the late 1960s/early '70s, in favour of

Gay. Which surfaced out of many deliberately ambiguous words in the 'twilight' (fearful) homosexual world — others included 'musical' and 'so' — and as such had a long pedigree. 'Gay' (homosexual) wasn't, as the right's self-elected experts on language affect to believe, borrowed *de novo* in 1970 from 'gay' (light-hearted, sportive, mirthful — *OED*). It's good English.

- And a conceptual shift. 'Gay' began to be used a generation ago by homosexuals of both sexes to assert an absolute intention of being guilt-free (having self-respect) and open (declining self-concealment) — being *glad to be gay* and *out*. By the mid-'70s homosexuals in the women's movement were increasingly referring to themselves as 'lesbian feminists' and urging that 'gay women' adopt for preference

Lesbian. Derived, of course, from the memory of 'woman-loving' Sappho, 'the 10th Muse', as ancient Greeks referred to her, who lived in Lesbos.
Meanwhile the women's movement, modelling the term on 'racism', had developed as all the world knows, the word

Sexism. Which has been traced (in print) at least as far back as a 1968 American article, Vanauken's *Freedom for Movement Girls — Now.* The sharpest definition may well be Liz Stanley and Sue Wise's 'the name of the problem addressed by feminism' (*Breaking Out — Feminist Consciousness & Feminist Research,* RKP 1983).
Within the last decade the vocabularies and concepts respectively of the 1860s and the 1960s have been put together to yield — we have arrived!

Heterosexism. The first (printed) usage found by Pandora Press's *A Feminist Dictionary* (publ. 1985) was in a 1980 article by lesbian publisher Julia Penelope. By 1983 Sona Osman in *Spare Rib* ('A to Z of Feminism') was offering the definition:

- 'The belief that heterosexuality is better, more 'natural' or 'normal' (both words no feminist should use without extreme caution) than homosexuality. Like sexism and racism, it ranges from the overt and violent ('queer-bashing', believing homosexual sex should be illegal) to the subtle (asking lesbians, but never oneself, 'how you got that way'; thinking that some lesbians and gay men are too 'blatant' even though displays of heterosexual sex are all around us).'

Oh yes, and **homophobia**. Black American writer Audre Lorde was certainly using it in 1978. Here's Jan Cordova's definition of 1981: 'The straight person's anger at being so confused'. Simple. ●

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The birds and the bees

What sex education?

MOST OF US have awful stories to tell of the incomprehension about our own physiology, let alone the other sex's, with which we ended our school-years.

Unsurprising. 'Sex education' isn't a curriculum subject in any of the 104 educational authorities in England and Wales or 12 authorities in Scotland. It's scattered *ad lib* across biology, religious studies, literature, general science, health education.

Now the drive's on to persuade each school to have a *policy* (DES draft circular of 6 August) to be reached in consultation with parents (already stipulated in Section 8 Education Act 1980).

Overview of the current situation: 'Sex education's patchy and there's rarely any co-ordination. Pupils learn a bit here and a bit there in very haphazard fashion — no thought-out strategy or goals'.

That's Jane Fraser, who's been giving 'sex talks' in schools for 15 years and is a counsellor with the Brook Advisory Centres and member for six years of their educational and publishing unit producing new sex education teaching materials. Her solution?

● '"integrated studies", very successful in eg Denmark. Each syllabus teacher knows what colleagues are doing *re* sex education and accordingly what stage the pupil's knowledge has reached. *Issues* are talked through in small-group tutorials'.

Fraser finds 'tremendous confusion' in youngsters and a 'thirst' for knowledge. A 'drastic rethink of policy is long overdue'. Homosexuality? 'Children will feel free to ask, and to discuss it, once they realise the teacher's prepared to answer'.

Over to a headteacher: Michael Marland, head of the North Westminster Community School, central London. He's scathing about the general schools approach to sex education: 'inadequate, inaccurate and sexist. *Sexuality* needs to be taught, including homosexuality. Nothing's ever discussed except procreation — the traditional "women's role"'. His solution?

● 'A "personal needs" programme, a shared effort between teachers, woven through pastoral work and many of the curricular subjects'.

And what does he think of the Ealing/Haringey requests for 'positive images' of lesbians and gays?

● 'In my view we're witnessing the beginnings of a new consensus in sex education. There isn't *that* much difference between what those boroughs are seeking and what the Inspectorate and the DES have recently said: that sex education is to be taught and to be taught properly'.

Over to author Carol Lee, socialist feminist, writer of *The Ostrich Position: Sex, Schooling & Mysticism*

● 'There should be specialist teachers trained to do the job, failing which — for it's an unlikely development — it should be an important part of all teacher training courses. But it isn't.'

Headteachers are free to invite in speakers, such as Jane Fraser, from Brook Advisory Centres, or the FPA. Discussions on abortion are sometimes led by speakers from 'Life' or the British Pregnancy Advisory Service. If homosexuality's to be on the agenda schools could always ask for a homosexual. What?

● Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE) has a tape-slide kit *Homosexuality: A Fact of Life* which five or six schools a year ask for, and is working on a further one for older students and the workplace.

● Deeply moving to all but the deafest ears is London Gay Teenage Group's *Something to Tell You* (self-published 1984) which contains unique and statistically rigorous polling of lesbians and gay children's (adolescents') own views as well as personal experiences. Most encouraging stat: 51 per cent were 'out' to all the family; most terrible: 19 per cent had attempted suicide, 21 per cent had been beaten up.

Classroom mentions of homosexuality?

● It had come up most frequently in English classes, followed by religious studies, followed by biology, followed by sociology.

Indeed, as Michael Marland says, the present position is 'inadequate'. ●

existence of (eg) contraception, abortion, homosexuality, there's nothing academically sound or morally reputable to be taught in schools other than 'moral values,' that irretrievably co-opted and debased phrase, whose use damages rather than sustains debate.

What lies all around us, itself a developing science, *not* an ideology but with a weight of accumulated material, is the evolution of humanity's notions about its own sexual make-up and sense of sexual self. In our accompanying box *(this page)* we sketch, in the most abbreviated and admittedly souped-up style, the merest fragment of such a syllabus. It deals with the origins of the words we all fling around and at one another. Rare, surely, is the 16-year-old who left school this summer knowing any of it.

THE COMMONPLACE observation that biological knowledge and notions about sexual identity and propriety change over time, let alone from place to place, isn't itself an intrusion of ideology into sex education: it's an attempt to begin the *extrusion* of an ideological bias that seems to have frozen all debate, like the Medusa's smile. With the single concept 'evolution' very much in mind (and *not* identifying it wholly with 'progress') look at what the right is up to. We are surely seeing a continuation by other means of the 19th century tussle about the admissibility of the theory of evolution, incredible as that may seem in a modern European free society — the 1986 British Education Bill struggle as a scarcely-veiled re-run of the 1930s 'Scopes monkey trial' of Tennessee, in which a teacher had to fight through the courts for the right to present children with an alternative to the creation account in Genesis.

The *politics* of it aren't hard to spot, once the controversy is re-delineated in this form and rescued from the witless and on occasion authentically evil level to which the hothead right's skirmishing has sunk this spring and summer. *Example:* a Tottenham Conservative councillors' press release this 2 July describing Haringey council's request to schools that they encourage 'positive images' of lesbians and gay men as 'a bigger threat to normal family life than [Nazism] or the guns of Adolf Hitler'.

The zany American right has recurrent 'creationist' bouts even now, in which its seeks to demolish the possibility of evolution, rather than grapple with the huge problems of its dynamics, as better minds are doing. The direct parallel in the present sex education debate is the 'moral right's' drive to preserve, and more, to *legislate* to preserve, views on the 'facts of life' which are, like those of the creationist fundamentalists in the evolution of species argument, based on the speculations of earlier moralists. For the 'facts of life' adapt, as society adapts. The sexual 'creationists' would stop the clock on new-found (at least, newly articulated) notions of self-respect, above all among women and young people.

And among lesbians and gay men. Anyone who has followed this year's sex education row, let alone public life for 30 years (Wolfenden 1954, Sexual Offences Act 1967, 'GLC for gays' 1981, all completely pre-dating Aids), can't fail at intervals to be baffled and exasperated—*why can't all sides shut up?*— by the ceaseless controversy. The exasperation can overtake gays (as one of the present writers is) fully as much as straights or those who refuse to categorise themselves in either of these modern (evolved) ways.

The thing perhaps needs analysing anew — not that it has wanted profound analysis for six or seven generations already — if only because in the words of the Schools Inspectorate's June discussion paper, understated words in the circumstances, the lesbian/gay question is 'brought to pupils' attention inside and outside school'. What would any of *us* say to the young person suspicious of *anyone*'s 'positive images' — be they of lesbians and gays, or of the Bible?

'Why', the wise adolescent asks, 'when homosexuality is only a fraction of the appropriate subject-matter of schools sex education — interesting and important no doubt, but only a fraction — does Lord Molloy *(Labour)* on 28 July in the House of Lords call Haringey council's request for "positive images" of lesbians and gay men in education a cause of "grave concern and disturbance throughout the country"? Why do full-grown men, Tory MPs, defy a begging letter from their own junior education minister, Chris Patten (7 August) and insist that they'll amend the Education Bill to give parents the right to withdraw their children from sex education (code for a right to withdraw children from *any* non-prejudicial account of homosexuality)?'

We could respond with an analogy from planetary motions. It wasn't solely the great bodies in the sky, Venus or the sun or the moon, whose eccentricities had to be shoe-horned into the Ptolemaic system by some sort of main force, to the detriment of the calendar, till Ptolemy finally foundered, to the grief of the church in the 16th century. Right up Einstein's theory of relativity (1905) it was little Mercury which kept upsetting the rules. Twist and turn as today's 'sexual Ptolemaics' will — *here* on one occasion allowing that perhaps women aren't after all the biological inferiors of men; *there* on another occasion allowing that perhaps children aren't after all steeped in natural wickedness and must be kept down ferociously — twist and turn as they will, the 'Ptolemaics' find that the errant little body of homosexuality troubles and calls in

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question their system, their asserted 'natural order'.

The reiterated response, bad science incarnate, is to demand a universal pretence that 'Mercury' (homosexuality) isn't there. And that impulse is alive, and in blooming health. See these examples:

- 11 August, for Britain: Mrs Mary Whitehouse calls on Jeremy Isaacs, chief executive of C4, not to transmit any material which 'could make "gay" appear normal or in any way to be recommended'
- 18 August, for the world: The Pope, through the Congregation of the Sacred Faith, sacks Father Charles E. Curran, professor of moral theology at the Catholic University of America, in Washington — who promptly, and on behalf of reflective thought itself (not just a lost emolument) calls a press conference to justify himself. An 'evolutionist', though very, very gradual like all moral theologians, he had been mooting the idea that homosexual acts be 'sanctioned [by Catholicism] where there's a permanent loving relationship'.

That's a commonplace of modestly liberal Christian and Jewish moral thinking today. Advocacy of a pretence that 'Mercury' isn't there is sometimes combined with a recommendation that it be shot out of the skies:

- 19 August, for the 'thoughtful right': Digby Anderson, director of the Social Affairs Unit, considers Aids in his occasional column in *The Times*: 'I am not *yet* hounding homosexuals' *(our emphasis)*. Two weeks earlier as co-author of a new book, *Family Portraits*, he had accused the government and the Church of England of 'failing to support the traditional family' and equivocating over 'issues of sexual normalcy'.

In short, *make* the heavens and the earth be what scantily-informed earlier generations had hoped, or supposed, or speculated they might be. The astronomer Copernicus didn't set out in the 16th century wanting to cause an upheaval, nor, it may be supposed, did the theologian Curran today: both were applying their minds to anomalies. In this at least the Papacy is right today, as it was right four centuries ago: that paying serious attention to 'Mercury' (astronomical or homosexual) does rather alter things.

Dinosaur v clever monkey

As for example, if we apply a sexual calculus to the British schools intake this September:

> *Given:* 7 million children (5-16) are in school in England, Scotland and Wales
> *Given:* 4-10 per cent of people find themselves exclusively homosexual *(Kinsey & Hite,* qv box previous page)
> *Therefore:* 300,000-700,000 of those now in school are growing up to be lesbian or gay
> *Therefore:* 1 million parents, say (averaging and allowing for singles) are raising homosexuals
> *Proof* (under traditional, or 'Ptolemaic' calculus): Nothing should be done on behalf of these children's futures, nor on behalf of their parents. Their existence should be denied
> *Proof* (under enquiring, or 'post-Copernican' calculus): Since it's by and large unknowable *who* these children or parents are going to be, out of any intake, their existence should be surmised and they should be bullied by heterosexism or homophobia

A fine thing to find Giles Radice, Labour's front bench education spokesperson, tabling an amendment to the Education Bill in late July calling, like the Tory rebels, for parents to be allowed to keep children out of sex education. He tells the *NS* that the attempt will almost certainly not be repeated by Labour on 21 October. But why was it made? It seems to have been motivated by concern for the feelings of traditionalist ethnic communities in Labour constituences; or, if you will, rank terror that vital votes might be lost in the General Election run-up to fears about left-wing councils' alleged advocacy of 'permissiveness' in schools — and above all to fears about their 'encouragement' of homosexuality.

But why — reverting to our imaginary adolescent's exasperated cry to know why the quarrelling comes back again and again to the fractional question of homosexuality — can't lesbians and gays be quiet, instead of 'inciting' local press and local politicians, and subseqently national media and Parliament, with such calls as Ealing and Haringey's for 'positive images'? There's a French nursery rhyme about the shocking way puppies snarl if you poke them with a stick: *'L'animal est méchant, quand on l'attaque il se defend'.*

The more people try, whether it be the Pope suppressing his theologians or Mrs Whitehouse lobbying C4, to hold back an evolution, the more the potential gainers from that evolution will fight for their lives (to put it rudely no doubt the dinosaurs accused the tree-monkeys of 'flaunting'). On our count, out of 12 London boroughs held by Labour *six* intend to appoint or have already appointed 'out' lesbian/gay officers (as do or have *eg* Nottingham, Leicester and Manchester) and *all* have pro-gay commitments. The forum for Labour-held London boroughs, the Association of London Authorities, is advertising a £17,000 job-share lesbian/gay post now. As Bob Crossman, this year's 'out' gay major of Islington puts it, 'to a lot of people [this business of homosexuality] is a first-time trauma; to us it's second nature'.

We have called the DES and Schools Inspectorate discussion documents for 1986 'illiterate'. Both sell the *intellectual*, the *educational*, pass in their advice on homosexuality, the inspectorate allowing that any attribution of 'normality' is 'a breach of the religious faith upon which they were founded' in church schools; the DES, criminally, *ordering* that every pupil be clear that male homosexuality ('being gay') is a prisonable/remand/taken-in-care offence under 21. Neither emphasising that both these circumstances have historical roots and are subject to amelioration or change. They are not 'facts of life', in short, only of British and/or sectarian life.

We recommend that 'sex education' pivot on the history curriculum. Two, final, supporting observations: only persons born before 1952 (which is virtually all the spokespersons of the moral right) didn't become familiar with the *terms* gay and lesbian before the end of adolescence. And, reverting to the moral right's views on sex education as 'creationist': Darwin's *Origin of Species* was published 1859. The terms 'homosexual' and 'heterosexual' were invented just 10 years after. □

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MINISTERS BOYCOTT STATE SCHOOLS

It's no wonder this government let the teachers' dispute drag on. JACK STRAW's research into ministers' choices as parents shows they know nothing from direct experience of the education 94 per cent of us get

EVERY MEMBER of the present Cabinet has boycotted state secondary schools for their own children, even where grammar schooling has been available. The Cabinet's direct experience of the state secondary system is less even than their experience of the National Health Service. That this government is uncommitted to and neglectful of state education is not surprising. What is most damning however, is the totality of the Cabinet's boycott. The other revealing — and surprising — result of my survey is how defensive most Cabinet Ministers are about their involvement in private education.

No one chooses their own school. What people can and do decide is where their own children go to school. Back in April, I decided to find out just what support, in their own lives, Cabinet Ministers had shown for the state system, which they claimed to back but which they have so actively undermined. Some, but very little information is available from published sources. Where my information was incomplete, I wrote to the Cabinet Ministers concerned. But I made clear in my letters that, both for reasons of privacy and, in some cases, to protect their physical security, I had no intention of publishing the names of the children concerned, nor of the particular schools which they had attended or were attending.

Two Cabinet Ministers replied directly to my question — Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe, and Employment Minister Kenneth Clarke. Howe (who gets my vote as the next Tory leader) clearly does have the courage of his convictions. He simply confirmed that my information was correct. Clarke told me that, as a consequence of my letters, my popularity rating among the Cabinet 'had plummeted'. Nonetheless, he confirmed that, after primary education in the state sector, he had sent his children to fee-paying secondary schools — although one did go on for a time to attend a state sixth form college.

Five Ministers chose not to reply at all (their failure to do so does not undermine my confidence in my conclusion): another nine did reply in the end, usually after reminders. Their replies are vignettes of the bizarre, the pained, the evasive — and, in Norman Tebbit's case the offensive. Nicholas Ridley replied that the 'complications of this matter are great, and I do not feel any sense of Ministerial responsibility. While writing . . . would you be kind enough to let me know the details of every motor car you have acquired since your first purchase? I must warn you that I might well publish the information when I receive it!!' (sic) I have given Ridley the answer to his query (and pretty boring it is too — three Austins): I have had no further reply from him.

Lord Hailsham's reply was equally bizarre in its own way. He told me that my enquiry was 'an intrusion on the privacy to which Ministers are entitled to the same degree as other subjects of the Crown'. All his children are grown up, and one at least — Douglas Hogg, Conservative Member for Grantham — is happy to advertise his schooling in his entry in *Who's Who*.

Most of the others pleaded privacy for their evasion, including Lord Whitelaw, John MacGregor, Douglas Hurd — and the new Education Secretary, Kenneth Baker. Given my undertaking not to disclose names or schools, the point was and is entirely bogus. Kenneth Baker pleaded that he was 'quite happy to answer questions about *my* life but not about my family'. But the question was about *his* life, the decisions which *he* has made for his family. In a recent, self-congratulatory, article in the *News of the World* (24 August), Baker said: 'Like any parent, I want to preserve the best, and improve the rest'. Unfortunately for Baker's image as the man who cares about state education, it is only 'bought' that has been best for him — and the rest of his colleagues.

WHEN BAKER spoke in that article of 'preserving the best' he was using code for the selective grammar schools — the system that educated Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, but which she chose to ignore for the education of her own children. The Conservatives claim to be the guardians of the grammar schools. But when grammar schools were widely available, they were rarely used for the education of Conservative MPs' children (and certainly not by the older members of this

Where Cabinet Ministers went to school

Margaret Thatcher	Grantham High School
William Whitelaw	Winchester — £5,010 per year
Lord Hailsham	Eton — £1,575 per term
G. Howe	Winchester — £5,010 per year
L. Brittan	Haberdashers' Aske's — £700 per term
N. Lawson	Westminster — £1,540 per term
K. Joseph	Harrow — £1,800 per term
J. Prior	Charterhouse — £1,680 per term
P. Walker	Latymer School — £650 per term
M. Heseltine	Shrewsbury — £1,580 per term
G. Younger	Winchester — £5,010 per year
N. Edwards	Westminster — £1,540 per term
P. Jenkins	Clifton College — £1,600 per term
J. Biffen	Dr Morgan's Grammar School
N. Fowler	King Edward VI, Chelmsford
N. Tebbit	Edmonton Grammar
T. King	Rugby — £1,610 per term
M. Jopling	Cheltenham — £1,520 per term
P. Rees	Stowe — £4,950 per year
N. Ridley	Eton — £1,575 per term

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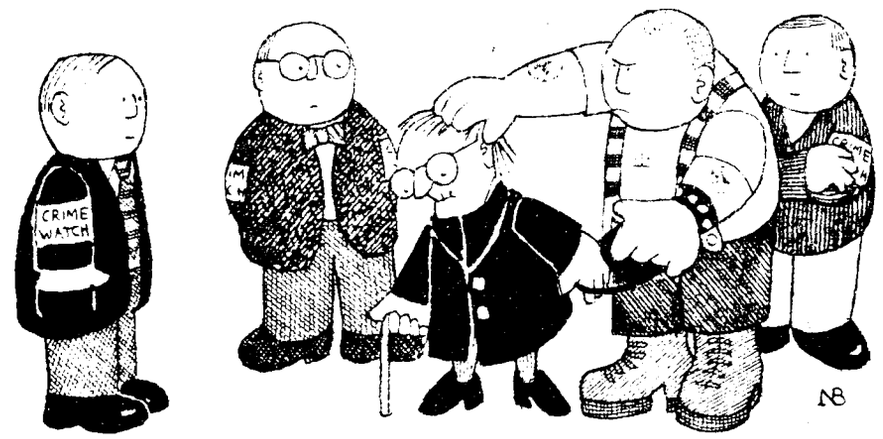

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Cabinet). Even today, grammar schooling is available in 28 local education authority areas, including Barnet (Mrs Thatcher), Enfield and Redbridge (very handy for Mr Tebbit) and Gloucestershire (Nicholas Ridley). If Ministers prefer to live in the Home Counties rather than in their constituencies, why then Berkshire still has six grammar schools, Essex eight Buckinghamshire 14 and Kent 28.

Norman Tebbit is also a proud product of the grammar schools, but his confidence in those schools was never such as to allow his children to be educated by them. They went private, too. Tebbit's reply to me was characteristic: 'I wonder if you could tell me whether you are extending your enquiries to the children of actors who appeared in your party political broadcast, or those of your own colleagues, and, if so, whether you will publish the results of those enquiries.'

I know nothing of the actors, but Tebbit's point about the Shadow Cabinet is a fair one. Unfortunately for him, Shadow Cabinet Ministers have had the courage of their convictions, and all those who have had an opportunity to send their children to comprehensive schools have done so. I have been able to identify only one Shadow Cabinet member who sent one child to private secondary school, and that was a very long time ago. Of course, while Conservative Cabinet Ministers plead privacy for their decisions about their own children's schooling, they would never extend such protection to any Labour politician.

WHEN THE CONSERVATIVES were elected in 1979, they thought that education was a winner for them, and that their insidious propaganda about educational standards would work to their advantage. Seven years on, they are now profoundly on the defensive, as the sacking of Keith Joseph and the appointment of the superficial salesman, Kenneth Baker, illustrates all too well. As with the Health Service, the Conservatives' problem with the education service is fundamental. They do not use it, so they have only their own propaganda to go by.

There is a yawning gap between Ministers' perceptions and those of the 90 per cent of parents who do use the service. Contrary to Central Office's hopes, parents remained very loyal to the teachers, despite the damage the teachers' dispute was doing to their children's education. Parents have not been taken in by claims that, under this government, expenditure per pupil has increased: for this government planned that such spending should be cut, and it has only increased thanks to local education authorities ignoring government targets, and their ratepayers often incurring major financial penalties as a consequence.

There are the soundest considerations of equality in favour of integrating the private fee-paying system within the state system. But there is also the managerial argument. The Public Schools Commission made this point powerfully in its report 18 years ago: 'The biggest single disadvantage of having two sectors of education . . . is that those who can afford to opt out of the maintained system care less about its development . . . If all influential parents had children in maintained schools, they would have brought pressure on Parliament and Whitehall to make them better than they are.'

Not until we see Conservative Ministers sending their children to state secondary schools will any of us be convinced that the Tories see the state system as no more than second best — for *them*, but never for *us*. □

Jack Straw is Labour MP for Blackburn and a front bench spokesman on Environment.

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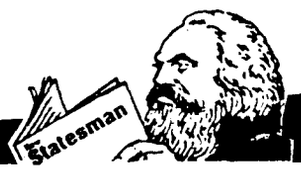

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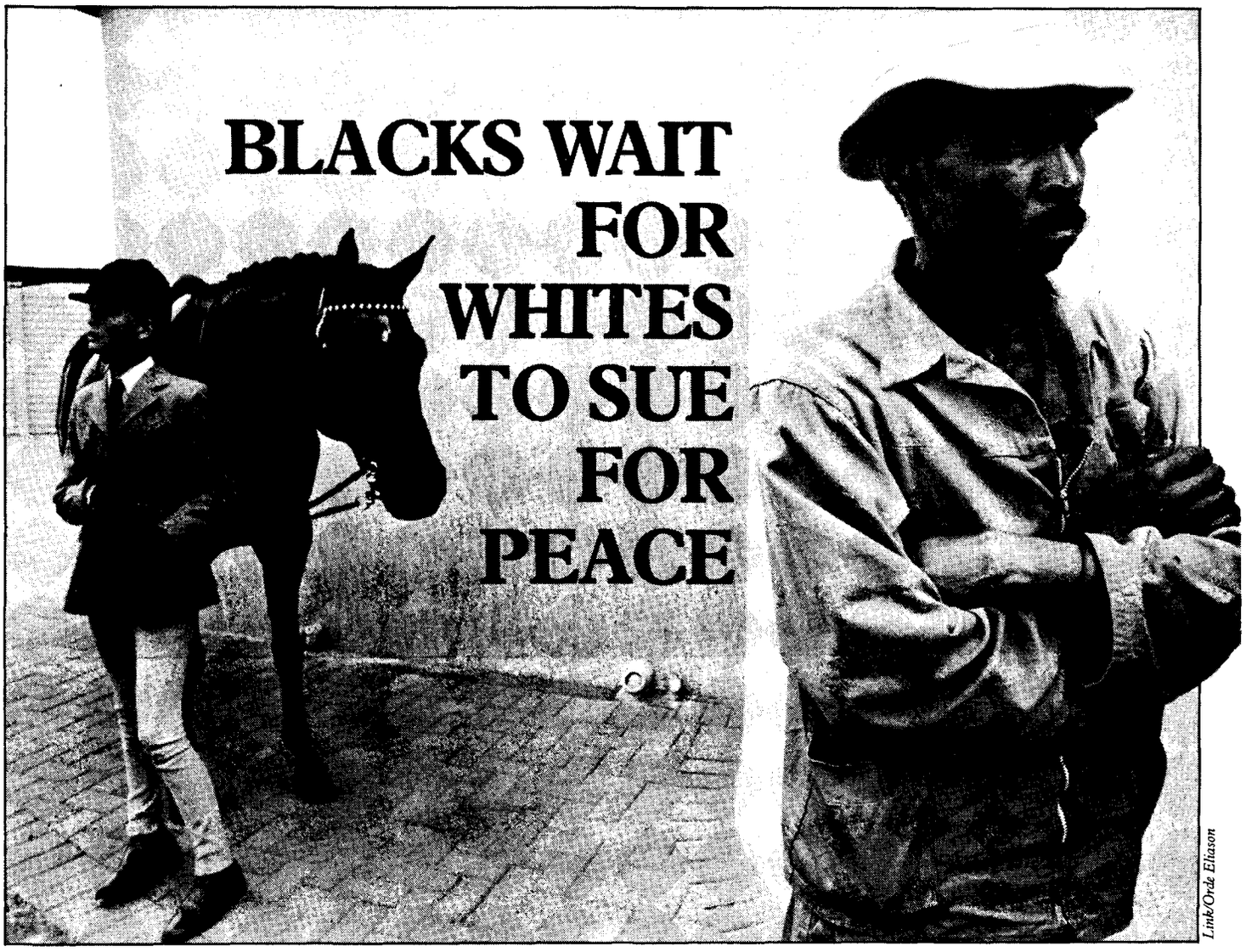
BLACKS WAIT FOR WHITES TO SUE FOR PEACE



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The Vaal Agricultural Show

Behind their public position whites are divided about whether to fight on — or bow to the inevitable. MICHAEL ATTWELL predicts they *will* learn to live with black rule but wish they had done a deal earlier

A CENTRAL QUESTION concerning South Africa's current unrest is what precisely, in political terms, it represents. Is it likely to prove an abortive or a successful attempt to overthrow white supremacy? For many months one would hardly have dared to pose the issue in this way: but it appears increasingly credible now to do so.

State control of black townships has broken down. Black groupings, loosely associated with the broadly-based United Democratic Front (UDF), have begun to set themselves up there as alternative authorities. The government has felt compelled to undo so much apartheid legislation that there can never be a return to the status quo ante. The simple reality is that white South Africa and its government have lost the initiative, and are beginning to lose control of the country. So where are events likely to lead from here?

The street radicals, the UDF, the black unions, and the African National Congress abroad in exile all intend to try to extend the assault on white power. The economy remains largely intact but it is inconceivable that it can become substantially healthier. White income and living standards will be increasingly affected in an adverse way. With the determination of young blacks unbroken even by the reality of the ever-present prospect of death, the security forces cannot hold the line at the black townships forever. More and more people will start slipping through the net. Whites will find riot, arson, bombings, and murder becoming part of the normality they inhabit. Nor is there any prospect of a let-up.

There will come a time — five years is the absolute minimum, 15 the absolute maximum — when the majority of whites will reach the point that black rule becomes a lesser evil than ever-increasing calamity and their own ruin. They will then begin the process of suing for peace. That peace will not be quickly achieved, but in the end, the bulk of white South Africa will sign the document of their own surrender. Majority rule and black government will come to South Africa. It will have taken many years, and it will have cost many thousands of lives, perhaps even tens of thousands. But come it will.

This unfolding of events is decreed by the logic of South African politics. White and black nationalism are fundamentally incompatible. White nationalism requires at the very least that whites retain the power of veto over government. Black nationalism, in order to remove discrimination and elevate the condition of South Africa's majority, requires changes which whites regard as unacceptable. A white veto would mean in practice the stopping of such changes, so black nationalism must remove that veto first. Majority rule thus becomes necessary. The basic issue of power is incapable of being resolved by negotiation. It can only, and will only, be resolved by violence and bloodshed — the time-honoured way of deciding such basic disagreements.

Hastening white collapse

Certain things flow from this. The South African government's reforms, for instance, are real but irrelevant. They are also a sign of their growing weakness and not their strength. Sanctions are not, *pace* Desmond Tutu, the last means to achieve a peaceful settlement — *there are no such means at all.* But they are an important way of bringing an added dimension to the war of attrition and hastening

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white collapse.

The surrender document will provide for one person, one vote in a unitary South Africa, and the African National Congress will form the first black government of the modern state. In terms of the underlying political logic, the ANC will win because it is the authentic voice of that black nationalism which is to be victorious. It will win because it is already the most widely-supported black political force; because the insurrection is being made in its name; and because there is no other sufficiently broadly-based or uncompromised body to take up the mantle of leadership.

There are four elements in the make-up of black politics: the street 'comrades', the UDF, the more anti-white and economically radical 'Africanist' strain of the National Forum (NF), and conservative blacks, including urban councillors and 'homeland' leaders like Chief Gatsha Buthelezi of KwaZulu. The 'comrades' overlap with both the UDF and the NF, but the bulk support the UDF. The NF itself is a fairly narrowly-based grouping of intellectuals, student activists, and trade unionists. The urban conservatives are discredited and have no political organisation; Chief Buthelezi controls perhaps four million rural Zulu, but has no support beyond his region and is hated by the other three elements. The UDF, on the other hand, is a loose coalition of hundreds of urban community organisations, drawing support from all classes, areas, political persuasions, and religions, and has good links with a majority of black unions. It will therefore play the crucial role in determining who wins at the ballot box. The UDF is the ANC's internal stalking horse: the links between them are tenuous; there is no direct co-ordination. But the UDF sees the ANC as its legitimate leadership, and when the time comes, it will deliver itself into their hands.

THE ANC WILL face many challenges to its rule, but one of the critical difficulties it will have to deal with at once is what attitude to adopt towards white South Africa. Some whites will suffer. A certain measure of street vengeance cannot be prevented. Black South Africa will expect the ANC to deliver a marked improvement in their career and life prospects, and in their standard of living. Jobs will have to be found at once for the millions of unemployed blacks. That third of whites who are in state employment comprise some of the least well-educated of their community, the most racist, and the most hostile to black aspirations. The ANC will want to take control of the machinery of government and remove it from these unsympathetic hands. It is a ready source of jobs. Many whites in this sector are therefore likely to find themselves displaced and will have to eke out a new future unprotected in the market place in competition with blacks.

But if white South Africa is having to come to terms with the black majority now, the black majority will, in its turn, have to come to terms with the white minority in the future. The facts are simple: the whites make up a sixth of the population and there are nearly five million of them. They control capital and the economy; they command know-how and skill denied black South Africa, a fact which cannot be reversed for years.

THIS WAR, like many wars, will be settled by morale. Blacks today have reached a level of political consciousness and determination where nothing will deter them from fighting on. The whites proclaim truculence and their own determination to fight on, but behind the public position, their attitudes are ambivalent and divided. There is a near-universal loss of belief in the moral legitimacy of white supremacy. They know they are engaged in a holding operation without moral sanction and without the possibility of victory.

It is against this background that crucial differences of interest within the white population must be seen. Most whites today have an economic base independent of the state. If unmolested, they could continue to live as normal, without themselves exercising political power. A large minority — about a third, but a minority nonetheless — depend on the state for their livelihood, so they need to retain control of that state. Unending conflict with blacks can only lead to increasing disaster for the majority; the minority are ruined whether they fight on or surrender, so they might as well fight in the hope of some unforeseen change of fortune.

For the moment, the majority is not convinced that the fight *will* bring ruin — though they suspect it very strongly. They are also reluctant to abandon the minority with whose support they have achieved their own worldly success. These two realities make further blood-letting unavoidable. But as the violence and chaos stretch out over the coming years, the self-interest of the majority will assert itself.

They built up the forces of law and order; they comprise a large proportion of their personnel; and they retain virtually all the operational expertise. This too cannot be wished away. The ANC can get away with displacing whites in the state sector because they are, in reality, among the weakest whites and expendable to others of their race. But the rest of that minority will remain a powerfully

China & apartheid

Jonathan Mirsky

BISHOP TUTU cannot have spent much time with African students during his week in China at the beginning of August. If he had, they would have told him that many Chinese regard blacks as sub-human 'heigui', or black devils. It is equally unlikely that the Anglican Bishop of Johannesburg discovered that South Africa and Peking probably share nuclear and diamond-mining technology.

On the contrary, at the end of his visit Tutu said that China had left an indelible imprint on him, and that he and his wife 'were blessed with love by our Chinese brothers and sisters'. The Chinese pulled out most of the stops for Tutu, and his week was an excellent example of the political hospitality with which the people's democracies impress visitors prepared to be impressed.

The bishop expressed his pleasure at China's religious freedom; there are 23 churches in Shanghai, he was told, and he saw people entering them on Sunday. He made no mention of the millions of illicit 'house Christians', who function outside the officially-approved religious system, nor of the party documents which lay down limitations on even the sanctioned institutions, including a prohibition on evangelising beyond church walls, and which look forward to the day when religion disappears altogether.

TUTU WAS ASSURED that China hates apartheid, Bishop K.H. Ding, chairman of the Patriotic Protestant Churches, told him: 'The Chinese Christians and the Chinese people are greatly concerned about our black brothers and sisters.' As a mark of great favour Tutu was taken to the politburo's summer headquarters at the beach northeast of Peking, where Premier Zhao Ziyang foresaw final victory for the African people and praised his visitor for being 'in the van of the struggle against apartheid'.

But only a few months ago Africans, who make up 1,600 of the 3,500 foreign students in China, demonstrated against what they insist is consistent Chinese racism. In late May hundreds of stone-throwing local youths in Tianjin attacked a noisy African party. After injuries on both sides, a number of African students were detained in an hotel.

To the surprise of the authorities the issue refused to die, and on 6 June a banner-waving demonstration of 200 African students was seen by foreign newspaper reporters who interviewed some of the participants. Although the following day a high official referred to the demonstration as an isolated incident, and spoke highly of the excellent relations between Chinese and Africans, the demonstrators had already given a different impression. 'All over China, African students are discriminated against', said a medical student from Togo. 'The Chinese do not consider us human.' Another student said: 'They brought us here, and they treat us like black devils.'

THE OFFICIAL who dismissed the demonstration as a one-off had admitted that occasional 'unhappy incidents' occurred, such as the double suicide of the African student and his Chinese girlfriend who were refused permission to marry. Such taboos lie at the heart of the racial taunts. Periodic wounding and even killing of Africans has occurred when enraged Chinese men noticed black students making approaches to local women.

Such racism would have appalled Bishop Tutu. He would have been disturbed, too, by the well-founded reports of Peking-Pretoria trade contacts. In London, experts with daily knowledge of China's commercial activities describe Peking's requests to the South Africans for advice on diamond mining.

More alarming are the allegations about nuclear proliferation. Exactly a year ago, at a closed briefing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Alan Cranston accused the Reagan Administration of 'systematically withholding, suppressing and covering up information' on China's transmission of nuclear technology to 'five nuclear outlaws' — Brazil, Pakistan, Argentina, Iran and South Africa. Earlier, this charge had been made more specific by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, which in its 'Nuclear Proliferation Today' stated 'China had recently shipped 3 per cent enriched uranium to South Africa'.

The Chinese have always rejected this charge. Their London embassy did so again recently. But the South African embassy spokeswoman did not deny the nuclear contacts; she said only that no statistics were available. □

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entrenched force. If the ANC treat them wisely and generously, the resources they command will be slowly made available. If they act precipitately and harshly, the country will pay an awesome price.

The ANC has always recognised the right of whites to a home in South Africa. The stance of non-racialism was adopted many decades ago, and the ANC has proved its commitment to this in its practice and conduct as much as in its philosophy. Whites have traditionally occupied important positions of leadership in the movement.

In a remarkable interview last year with a newspaper read predominantly by whites, the Johannesburg *Sunday Star* — an interview the government would not allow to be published — two leading exiled ANC men, Oliver Tambo and Joe Slovo, spoke with great sensitivity to the fears of the bulk of white South Africa. Those whites who have met with other ANC leaders abroad have encountered similar conciliation. Those who have spoken to Nelson Mandela in prison recently have found the same attitude. There is every reason to believe the ANC will wish to seek racial harmony, rather than further confrontation.

FROM WHAT WE know of the ANC's history, its internal structure, and its general pronouncements we can therefore make inferences about its conduct in government. There will be no driving of the whites into the sea. The ANC knows that rapid growth and the return of prosperity will be vital. They will want to take majority holdings in many of the largest companies in South Africa and put their own people in positions of responsibility. But it seems likely too that they will allow substantial ownership and management to remain with whites, at least for the foreseeable future.

They will want to nationalise some of the biggest agricultural operations and unoccupied white-owned farms to redistribute land towards the dispossessed rural peasantry. But the bulk of white agriculture cannot be interfered with too drastically without a disastrous collapse of output. So it seems likely that many rural whites will be allowed to function as normal. *Realpolitik* and philosophy will reinforce each other to suggest only limited action against white South Africa. Most of that community are likely to find, as they are already suspecting, that they can indeed live with black rule.

I suspect this will be one of the great ironies of white South Africa's long and turbulent history. And in fact, if the ANC does adopt this general stance, it will be they who pay the highest price in the future. The ANC will not be able to satisfy all black aspirations at once. The disillusioned are likely to turn to more radical counsels who will charge that the ANC is being too soft on whites. There will be a large and potent constituency for more drastic action, and the ANC may find its clemency its own undoing. In the greatest irony of all, white South Africa may yet wish — when it will be too late — that they had come to terms with the ANC sooner. □

Michael Attwell is the author of South Africa: Background to the Crisis, *published today by Sidgwick & Jackson, price £14.95 (hb), £9.95 pb.*

ESCAPE FROM THE CAPE

KAFKA IN AFRICA

PHILLIP VAN NIEKERK and PAT SIDLEY got away from South Africa's reporting restrictions for an assignment in Zimbabwe

Harare

PAT AND I were assigned to cover the meeting of the non-aligned movement in Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe, for the *Boston Globe* and a Dutch news agency, the Algemeen Nederland Persburo (ANP), respectively. It was with relief that we left South Africa and its three-month-old State of Emergency.

The assignment began innocuously enough, walking off Flight SA 328 at 3pm on Friday 29 August. We were waved through customs and immigration by friendly Zimbabweans offering a contrast to the kind of bureaucrat one contends with in South Africa.

Two hours later, in the block-like Monomatapa Hotel in central Harare, two men in crimplene suits introduced themselves with that familiar question which brooks no reply: would you come with us? The invitation was directed at Pat.

Leaving Phillip bewildered in the press accreditation room, she was squashed into the front of a van and driven off into town. Terrified, she broke into tears. Her escorts were indignant. 'Why are you crying? Do you think we are like South African police?'

In room 24 of the central police station the key question was put. Are you a South African spy? The previous week, they claimed, a mysterious figure was discovered rifling the press accreditation files for the summit. Challenged, she had identified herself as 'Patricia Sidley'. Pat — the real one — protested ineffectually. She had been in the Eastern Cape the previous week, on union business for the Southern African Society of Journalists (of which she is president), a fact easy to double-check.

They did not believe her.

Back in the hotel Phillip anxiously questioned officials: 'Is there any problem?' 'No', said one, adding suspiciously: 'Do you expect there to be a problem?'

A friend arrived at the hotel. She was sitting with Phillip, waiting for developments. And they came, in the form of two more crimplene-suited officials. 'Would you come with us?' It was a saloon car this time, with escorts back and front. They made the same journey, to the central police station.

THEY CAME in relays, the questioners, all refusing to identify themselves. None of them knew where Pat was. Or what Phillip and his friend were doing there. They wanted to know what Phillip was doing there. Phillip wanted to know what he was doing there. They didn't know what Phillip was doing there, what they wanted to know was what Phillip was doing there. Phillip was there trying to find out what he was doing there. Which they didn't know.

Eventually Phillip was bundled into a van — with his Zimbabwean friend — and taken to another police station. It did not have any telephones. But it did have a man with a name. The first official to identify himself: Detective Inspector Makwara of the homicide division. 'There is no crime here', he announced, Poirot-like, after two minutes of questioning. He took us home.

Pat's interrogation was also over. Dinner time had arrived and — presenting her with pen and paper and orders to compose a full biography and account of her political views — the interrogators had de-camped. Four pages later they returned to announce they were taking her back to the Monomatapa.

The following morning Inspector Makwara collected us both and took us back to the central police station, to collect Pat's papers and clear up the confusion. Escorting us to the press accreditation centre at the Monomatapa he assured us all would be all right — and left.

Phillip got his accreditation. The official accused Pat of being a spy. If she wanted to be accredited, he said, she would have to contact the Secretary for Information, Justin Nyoka. She got him on the phone. 'You're not the woman we are looking for', he declared. She was given her accreditation.

On Monday we covered the non-aligned summit at the Sheraton Conference Centre until a protocol official in the press centre fixed Pat with a beady eye and said: 'Don't I know you from somewhere?' She protested: 'No.' 'Would you come with me?' he asked in that familiar fashion. 'There's a man who wants to see you both.'

It was Justin Nyoka. He was sitting in the cafeteria with the press corps, sipping beer. 'I am stripping you both of your press acceditation,' he announced. 'And you are to leave the country immediately. I am not giving any reasons. And there is no appeal. And if you call a big press conference we will be forced to consider you an enemy of the people and the government of Zimbabwe and will be forced to tell all we've got on you.'

After pleading — 'Please do, we'd like to know what we're supposed to have done' — he confiscated our cards and summonsed two officials to take us to the airport. They took us to the basement of the Sheraton Hotel. What were we doing without press accreditation, an official asked? And accused us of entering the country illegally, indicating we would not be allowed to leave in a hurry.

A telephone rang and we were summonsed up to hotel reception. Another anonymous official announced there was nothing wrong with us. Our press accreditation was withdrawn, but we were not being deported. And we were free to go. Within a hour of getting back to our friend's house in Harare the semi-official Zimbabwe news agency announced that we were South African spies.

We caught Flight ZA161 to Johannesburg, departing Harare at 8.30am on Wednesday. At 1600 hours the South African government announced that journalists were not allowed to report on any actions of the security forces.

Sweet normality. □

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PROFIT SHARING: NOT A SOLUTION TO OUR PROBLEMS

DOUG JONES

EVER SINCE Nigel Lawson read *The Share Economy* by MIT Professor Martin Weitzman during the tedious bits of the Group of Five finance ministers' meeting last year, the Treasury has been bending its collective mind to the issue. The government has now placed before us a consultative document on the matter, to which responses are invited.

What does profit-sharing consist of? It is claimed that at the heart of both our unemployment and inflation problems lies wage inflexibility. If wages could be cut during a recession, firms would sack fewer workers. And if base wages could be restrained during the upturn, firms would take on more workers rather than passing higher wages on to price increases.

Profit-sharing achieves this flexibility because workers convert part of their wage, or at least their wage increases, into a share in profits which goes up when profits rise, and which goes down when profits fall.

The most controversial claim is that, under profit-sharing, firms would have a built-in incentive to take on more workers. According to this theory firms keep hiring employees while the value of what they produce is more than the cost of their wage. If wages are lower, more workers are taken on. Understandably, employees do not want to take wage cuts because they do not have a share in the extra profits generated by extra employment and output. But if there was profit-sharing they would receive some of the gains.

The Treasury's Green paper proposes to offer income tax cuts as an incentive to workers whose firms accept profit-related pay (PRP). The total cost could exceed £1 billion. A quarter of the profit-share, which can be up to £4,000 or 20 per cent of total pay, whichever is smaller, would be tax free. Thus employees could receive 5 per cent of total pay tax-free — worth £3 a week to someone on average weekly earnings of around £200.

The Green Paper does not compare the benefits of a billion pounds spent on PRP to the benefits of a billion pounds spent on other measures. Yet it could

- finance 1p off income tax and create between 60,000 and 100,000 jobs;
- carry out much needed repairs and building of roads, hospitals, schools and houses and create between 70,000 and 125,000 jobs;
- be used to carry out the all-party House of Commons Employment Select Committee proposals to take 250,000 people, unemployed for over three years, off the dole.

But the Green Paper was surprisingly modest about the claims it made for its effect on jobs, observing only that: 'employment would be less variable over time'.

THE PROBLEM of employment in Britain at the moment is, of course, the *strong upward trend of unemployment*, not its *variability*. Moreover, the argument that PRP would reduce variability in employment, especially if it is adopted economy-wide, is debatable. At a time of recession, a fall in wages could serve to reinforce a downturn in demand, as happened in the early 1980s. The available empirical evidence in favour of profit-sharing is not very encouraging either. Weitzman cites Japan as a good example, but this was convincingly rubbished by Sushil Wadhwani in a recent lecture for the Employment Institute. Wadhwani pointed out that, even *with* profit sharing, Japan could not avoid 20 per cent inflation following the 1983 oil shock.

There are also practical difficulties in implementing profit-sharing: there is, for example, no uniform method of defining profit or of accounting for inflation. Transfer pricing, creative accounting and other measures of profit avoidance for tax purposes are already major industries in Britain — so how *would* real profit be calculated?

PRP rests on the false assumption by Lawson that the major source of flexibility for firms is employment. Not true. If a firm faces a downturn in demand for its output, it initially builds up stocks, then it cuts output by reducing the hours and intensity of work. If it expects a future upturn it will hang on to some of its workers — especially key skilled personnel. At the margin, variable pay *may* allow them to hoard their unused labour a little longer. But if there is no expectation of an upturn of demand for a firm's produce, then workers will be laid off anyway, regardless of whether their wages are high, low or flexible.

All that would happen with pay cuts is that certain people would still lose their jobs, but those left in the firm would suffer a loss of income as well.

And we cannot automatically expect that wage cuts will get passed on to price cuts. The reason that many firms cut output and jobs rather than prices has nothing to do with wage rigidity. Firms can often see no advantage in cutting prices — especially if they suspect that their rivals can easily follow them with price cuts of their own.

In many markets all firms have an interest in keeping prices high and then each firm competes for market share through innovation, advertising and marketing. A classic example of such practice is the UK car market in which prices are much higher than overseas; yet *none* of the major companies can see any point in cutting their prices, whether their cars be produced in high or low wage countries.

Indeed, if firms really believe that what they wanted was more workers at lower pay why is it that at present, with 3½ million unemployed, firms still prefer to raise real wages rather than employment?

This is not done just in response to trade union pressure, for it also happens in non-unionised companies. It is a deliberate act of policy by managers who see pay as a means of retaining and motivating employees. Pay is not a cost that is crudely minimised in the way textbooks would have us believe: many firms will *raise* wages rather than employment because they believe that this is the best way to maximise profits. Indeed, as firms have emerged from the depths of the recession they have preferred to rebuild profit margins rather than output and employment. Would things have been more than marginally different under wage flexibility?

Yet this is what is claimed by advocates of profit-sharing. They believe that profit-sharing eases the so-called 'insider-outsider' problem. This is the view that employed insiders have an incentive to keep wages high, whereas unemployed outsiders want lower wages so that employers have an incentive to take them on. Ironically, profit-sharing could exacerbate this problem, for the expansion of employment will tend to reduce the profit-sharing per employee.

THE FINAL PROBLEM of profit-sharing concerns non-profit-linked pay. If this is negotiated in the same way as now, then profit-sharing will make or little or no difference. Gavyn Davies, chief economist at Goldman Sachs, has tried to deal with this problem by proposing a tax-based incomes policy on base wages combined with tax incentives to link pay rises to profits. By restricting base pay and indicating that tax concessions will be permanent, Davies appears to deal with two omissions made by Lawson: but I do not see why profit-push inflation should not replace the problem of wage-push inflation.

Firms could raise their profits by increasing prices in order to give employees a more valuable profit-share, in the same way as they can now raise prices to finance higher base wages.

Rather than being a new idea, profit-sharing is really two old ones. The first is that if pay can be constrained during an upturn this will help that expansion create more jobs by restraining those inflationary pressures that will eventually cause the government to reverse the expansion. The second is that it is just the latest in the line of policies stressing the unity of interests between workers and their firms. In the past, wages have been linked to higher productivity or piece rates. And temporary pauses in pay rises have followed exhortations from the TUC, CBI and government. These policies usually worked for a while, and perhaps profit-sharing might as well, but the idea that profit-sharing will solve the central problems of the UK economy is an illusion. □

Doug Jones is Economic Assistant to Roy Hattersley, Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer.

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ALONE IN *SUNDAY TIMES*'S ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND

THE STAFF of *The Economist* cheered when Andrew Knight announced that their colleague Andrew Neil had been appointed editor of the *Sunday Times*. The two Andrews took the cheers to indicate a recognition of Neil's qualities. Everyone else present interpreted them as relief at being rid of a peculiarly obnoxious and arrogant fellow.

The editorial staff of his new paper soon discovered the stuff of which Neil was made. Most of them have now left, and not one, to my knowledge, has expressed any regret at leaving, merely sorrow that they didn't quit earlier an environment deliberately made unbearable by Neil and his cohorts. Their many colleagues who have left *The Times* since Charlie Wilson became editor after the death of Charles Douglas-Home are not as bitter. They recognise that Wilson is at least a professional, and human enough to recognise the problems of the refuseniks who would not follow their masters to Wapping.

The difference between the two editors explains why the final throw in Rupert Murdoch's great gamble may not be wholly successful. For while *The Times's* circulation, at over 500,000, is at a record level, that of its sister paper is slipping. In the past two years, the *Observer*, the historic rival, has gained a few thousand, while the *Sunday Times* has dropped by nearly 200,000 — a change that was noticeable even before the problems engendered by the move to Wapping. The *Sunday Times* now sells only just over 1.1 million copies, by far its lowest figure since the end of paper rationing a generation ago and only 300,000 more than the *Observer*, the smallest gap between the two rivals since the war. If the slide continues then the profitability of the *Sunday Times* and its crucial ability to finance Murdoch's present plans could be threatened.

The Murdoch plan had three stages: to take over the two papers; to move them steadily down-market; and to generate enough cash flow from union-busting to finance an even bolder leap — his attempt to create a fourth American television network.

The whole venture was extraordinarily bold, for the government is legally obliged to refer any takeover of a national paper to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission if the buyer already owns any other national papers. Murdoch, of course, already owned the *Sun* and the *News of the World*. However, there was a loophole: a bid does not have to be referred if the government is satisfied that the paper is not commercially viable. Obviously *The Times*, a steady money-loser for nearly two decades, passed the test of non-viability. To any ordinary outsider, the *Sunday Times* was viable. The paper had certainly suffered losses when it had restarted after the year's shut-down in 1978-79. But the government, and the accountants at the Department of Trade, examined only the period immediately after the shut-down, declaring loftily that they were not prepared to examine hypothetical future profits — even though merchant bank S. G. Warburg was simultaneously circulating a prospectus which forecast regular and growing profits for the *Sunday Times* in the near future.

Perhaps I am being unfair to the officials involved. They were probably simply acting under instructions from 'her indoors at Number 10'. For as the Press Council, not a notably radical body, found:

> since the closure had ended only a couple of months before the period being examined, it was remarkable that the *Sunday Times* had not made greater losses . . . Moreover the period being examined was one when a high proportion of British manufacturing industry, even normally profitable companies, were making losses. Using the department's criteria, whole swathes of the British industrial scene would have been classed as 'unviable' even though they, like the *Sunday Times* itself, soon resumed their habitual profitability once the worst effects of the depression had passed.

NICHOLAS FAITH

Murdoch could still have been blocked despite the government's deliberate bending of the rules to help a new proprietor who could be counted on for steadfast support. Although the sellers, the International Thomson Organisation, did everything they could to swing the sale to someone who they knew would stick by a settlement, they had to pretend to put the papers up for auction, and a number of consortia, some with solid financial backing, were formed to bid for the *Sunday Times*.

Murdoch's salvation came from two unlikely quarters: the print unions, who arrogantly assumed 'they could handle Rupe' and refused to accept the — relatively modest — job cuts contemplated by the alternative bidders; and the vanity of Harold Evans, then editor of the *Sunday Times*, who was supposedly leading one of the consortia. Murdoch seduced Evans into accepting the editorship of *The Times*. This removed the stuffing from the *Sunday Times*'s journalists, who would otherwise have supported their editor into funding a legal action (technically a writ of mandamus) which would have forced the government to refer the bid to the Commission and given time to prove the accountants wrong in their estimate of the paper's viability.

Murdoch is a far shrewder strategist than his critics concede. He allowed a deceptive interlude during which the character of the papers did not greatly change. Evans served his master's purpose by revamping *The Times* — which carried on relatively unchanged under his successor, Douglas-Home. At the *Sunday Times* Frank Giles, the long-serving deputy editor, was promoted to act, effectively, as a caretaker editor. The only hint of purges to come was the appointment — without the slightest pretence of consulting Giles — as editor of the immensely profitable *Sunday Times Magazine* of Derek Jackson, who had built up the equivalent on the *News of the World*.

GILES'S RETIREMENT, and Douglas-Home's death, provided the opportunity for the double whammy. Financially, the key was the move to Wapping, which had been decided nearly a year before the actual blow was struck: meticulous planning ensured that even the menus in the canteen (lavish) and the means of bringing in the food (by river or by helicopter) had been decided six months before the move. Equally precise editorial arrangements were made. Wilson and Neil were appointed, with the clear, if unwritten, understanding that they would move down-market to slug it out with the *Mail*. Increased circulation would, it was assumed, make up for any change in the readership profile. More, if less posh, readers would suffice.

This strategy fitted in with Murdoch's general view that 'journos' are either malleable or easily replaceable. The losses on *The Times* (many to the new daily planned for October, *The Independent*) have been made good by newcomers from the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express* — whose influence is already obvious on the news pages. The *Sunday Times* is proving a more intractable problem.

This springs partly from the curious character of the 'old' *Sunday Times*, which was less an orthodox paper than, in Arnold Wesker's words, 'an adventure playground for journalists'. It was hopelessly overstaffed, the wastage of talent was prodigious, the arrogance sometimes insufferable, the stories on which the talent was lavished sometimes not worthy of the effort involved. Yet, at its frequent best, it could rise to the occasion and achieve, as no other paper in the world, a thorough analysis of the previous week's events, and a steady series of exclusive stories which were more profound than the 'first-class scoops' of which Neil is fond of boasting.

Once Neil arrived the staff was doomed. Partly this was because of ageism. The staff was growing 'old' and Neil, a mere 34 when he was appointed, was not going to tolerate an older generation: 'anyone over 35 carries a yellow star' neatly expressed his philosophy.

Unfortunately, Neil has never attempted to analyse the sources of the paper's appeal. The first was simply political. Ever since Suez it had been wet, occupying the profitable, if narrow, ground between Ian Gilmour and Roy Jenkins. Neil turned it sharply right into an absolute Thatcherism at precisely the wrong time, when the consensus had turned against her. The swing to the right is even more noticeable on the business pages. Murdoch's ideal City section was written by the late Patrick Hutber in the *Sunday Telegraph*. Hutber had a penchant for worshipping dubious City slickers (who in his

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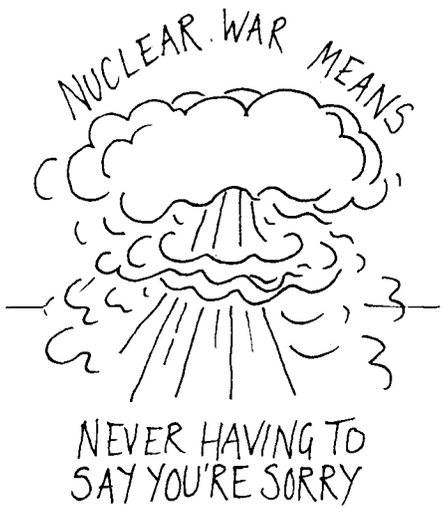
day mostly went broke in the crash of 1973-74). His tradition has been continued by Ivan Fallon, now the deputy editor of the *Sunday Times*, who ensures that the Business News is now almost exclusively a tip-sheet.

Unlike Wilson at *The Times*, Neil has no coherent vision of what he wants the paper to look like. His instincts pull him two separate ways. In a sense I can sympathise. I once moved, at an infinitely humbler level, from *The Economist* to the *Sunday Times* and the culture shock was considerable. Although *The Economist* sometimes gets first-class exclusive stories, it is essentially a reactive paper, providing a weekly analysis which puts the news into perspective. *The Economist* influence in reacting to, rather than anticipating, foreign news, can be seen in the *Sunday Times*'s foreign coverage, run by Stephen Milligan, a former colleague of Neil's.

TO RETAIN its readers' attention the *Sunday Times* has to provide them with a steady stream of new slants, new stories, exciting Insightful glimpses into the news behind the news, and that requires a depth of talent which simply cannot be bought overnight. Within a few months Neil had destroyed what Sir Denis Hamilton and Harold Evans took a decade to create. His rag-bag staff now consists of a few old-timers who have survived the purges and are simply soldiering on until retirement, a handful of bright young things planning their next move and a scratch crew of second-raters.

Neil can replace the missing depth in the paper's journalism only with what might be called '*Sun* stories', which are bound to grow more frequent as the pressure to bolster the circulation intensifies. The obvious case was the recent Queen-hates-Maggie shock horror drama. Neil's sheer amateurism showed through with his use of the replies to leading questions put by Simon Freeman (the paper had used the same technique to stir up a storm over the *Real Lives* television programme). Any other editor of a supposedly serious paper would have read both the front page story and the inside feature to the Palace — or would not have claimed, as Neil did originally, that they both had been read back to the hapless Michael Shea. Moral shoddiness is no bar to success with Murdoch. Amateurism and a falling circulation are. □



DIARY

Jonathan Sale

We are the grockles and emmetts. Like the poor farmers in John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*, we head West in search of better times. These can turn out to be a mirage at the end of the A30. Steinbeck had Okies from Oklahoma; we are the Okies headed for Okehampton and points North, South and West. We are voluntary refugees, flooding into Devon, eddying into Cornwall and splashing down into the tip of Celtic Britain. Across the Tamar, it is standing room only. Outside the fish-and chip shops of Western coasts, the pavements suffer from erosion. During the six-week season, the chains of the public lavatories suffer from metal fatigue; the conveniences are closed for repairs during the autumn, winter and spring, so that the locals have to go behind a bush.

Some of us have more action on the way than we do on arrival. We fall to bits on the motorway (as I did). We run out of petrol in Somerset (I've done that,too). We grind to a halt over Dartmoor for no reason known to automobile science (I did that, although the engine started first time when the RAC turned up). We forget our double airbeds and have to buy a spare in Bristol (it is now for sale, as new, all reasonable offers considered). And when we finally limp into our campsite, piggy-back on RAC Recovery low-loader or under our own steam, we plug our camping lights into the car battery for so long that the electrical system runs out of juice and we cannot start for home.

○

The English class system shows itself in a textbook manner, under canvas. There are palatial camp sites so vast that they need signposts to point out the route to the hairdressers and video games room. At night they echo to the sound of the disco room. These sites are for customers whose homes are far from palatial, the downmarket end of the tent freaks. The bourgeoisie of the camping fraternity have a modicum of facilities: hot water in the toilets, basins for washing dirty pots and a small shop where they save you a copy of the *Guardian* (on the odd occasions when the paper's circulation department remembers to ship a quire or so to the Western region). It is on a few square yards of this class of site that our trailer is unhitched. But the aristocrats' Tent Cities are pared to the bone. A few scattered pitches, most a long walk from the one water tap and a further trek from the single, unisex bog. These are for the campers whose homes of bricks and mortar possess the most mod of cons, whose children attend the costliest schools. The uncrowned king of our neck of the coast is a man who actually owns his own field, which he camps in all by himself. It has no facilities at all.

The one into which I drive my tent-pegs is going downhill. Originally, it was so high-class that it lacked a shop and you had to wash the dishes in water boiled up on your own Gaz burner. Over the last decade, the farmer has surreptitiously filled those gaps and gone on to add a children's games room and a colour television. To the toilet block, with its perfectly serviceable Gents, he added a separate Superloo for Men. The wife's brother-in-law used it once, when the ordinary Gents was full, and came back babbling of showers, of basins you could practically swim in, of shaver sockets. Here, he alleged, were men slapping on after-shave, splashing on deodorant, blow-drying their hair — before walking through the sand to plunge into the sea!

That was the last straw for me, and I began sounding out the possibility of shifting to the more classy, i.e. barren, site down the road. But it seemed that you had to know someone to get in, and I didn't.

○

On the beach, we run a strict admissions policy. Certainly entry to our little cove is about as easy as it is for a dark-skinned visitor passing through Heathrow. I say 'our', but it is ours only by virtue of ten years of bottoms warming its sand. Even so, outsiders respect the spot on the right, dead on the high tide mark, which is sacred to our extended family. Other groups, too, have their tribal sand, carrying over from year to year, which we would not dream of trespassing upon. The only person ever to come within hailing distance of our wind-break was Donald Soper. We turned up one day, and there was Lord Soper, holidaying on our fraction of beach. We made him welcome, of course, but for some reason he never came back.

The regulars who do return to their unofficial time-share of the sand, acquire definite identities; each year we add to, or subtract from, their characters. We do not know each others' names so we invent our own. The 'Angular' family, for example, based on their physiques, starkly revealed by bathing costumes cut high up the groin to flatter the leg (and that's just the men). 'Mrs Angular hasn't been for a swim yet', we say, when there is little else to occupy our minds.

'People come here as young children', said the farmer, 'then with their girlfriends, then with their own babies.' And then, he might have added, with women not their wives, or perhaps their wives come in the company of men bearing different names. Mr Angular ran off with his secretary and Mrs A. couldn't face the social stigma on the beach so we never saw her again. The next generation of Angulars have been trickling back to occupy the ancestral spot and the rest of us hope they avoid the mistakes of their elders.

Our own children have no time for us at all. We have gone back to Nature; they have merely run wild. The ten-year-old sprints into view from time to time, then disappears with his delinquent gang. The six-year-old will probably be taken into care.

Some parents have to find other outlets for their disciplinary urges. 'I'm not going to tell you again', I heard a father saying through the thin canvas of the tent next door but one. He was addressing his dog.

Jonathan Sale is Features Editor of Punch.
Roger Woddis will be back next week.

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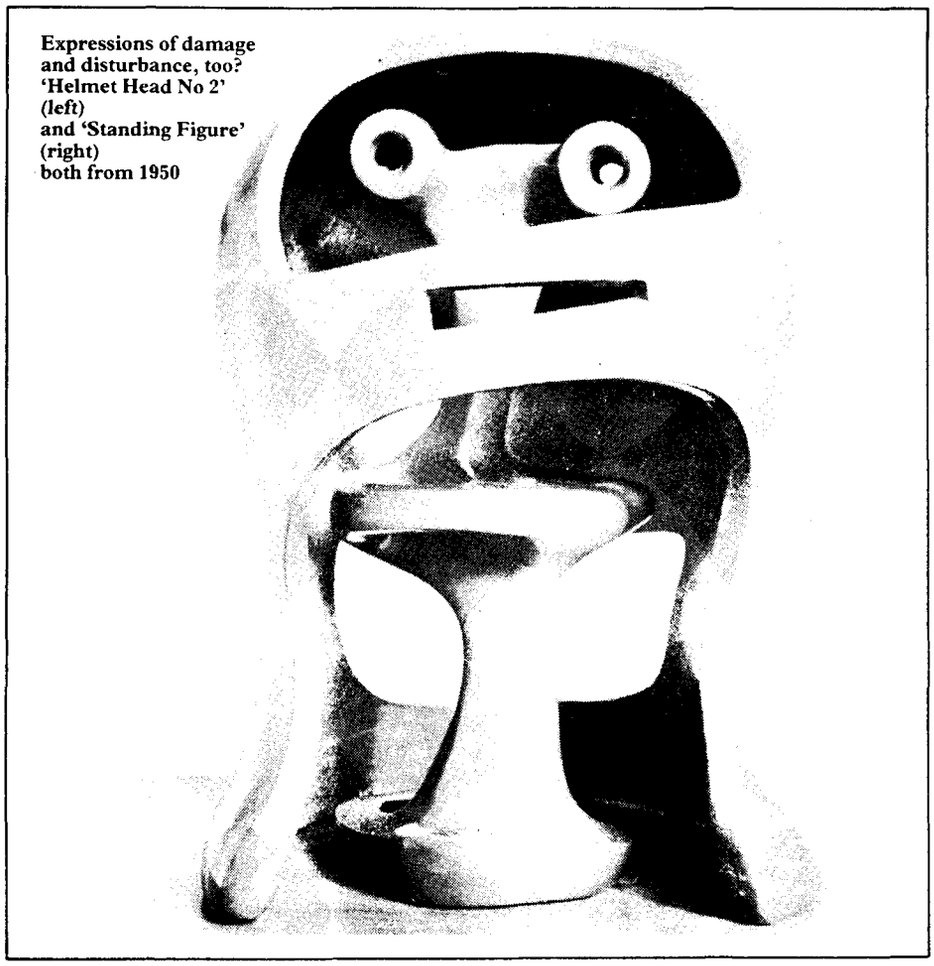
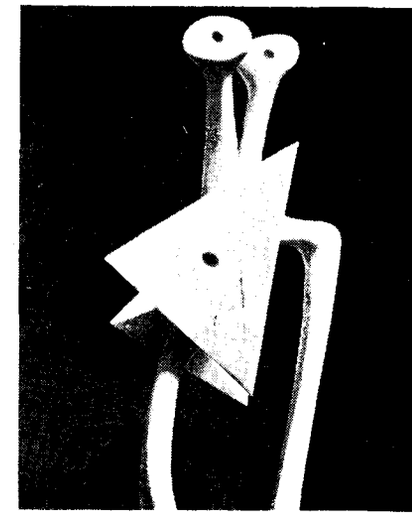
ART



Expressions of damage and disturbance, too? 'Helmet Head No 2' (left) and 'Standing Figure' (right) both from 1950



What sort of monument?

John Spurling

Grand old man of British sculpture Henry Moore died last week at the age of 88

HENRY MOORE'S WAS an exemplary artist's life: successful, hardworking, prolific, concentrated, long. 'The whole of my development as a sculptor,' he said:

> is an attempt to understand and realise more completely what form and shape are about, and to react to form in life, in the human figure, and in past sculpture. This is something that can't be learnt in a day, for sculpture is a never-ending discovery. I think about sculpture all the time. I have seen a great deal of the sculpture of the past. I work at it in my studio for ten to twelve hours a day. I even dream about it.

All his comments on his work and working-methods are similar, straightforward and informative, without vanity or false modesty. When you read them you wonder how any serious artist can be different. The job is to acquire your basic skills; put them immediately to the service of your own particular obsessions and predilections; develop your technique; refine your powers of observation; improve your knowledge of yourself and the world; think, study and, above all, practise. It sounds tough but not too complicated, moral but not too mysterious, dedicated without being fanatical, single-minded without being entirely egotistical.

In fact, of course, it is art seen from the viewer's end, the creation finished, the shape and form perceived and defined instead of desperately cast about for. Moore tells you about his problems and processes ('finishing a large wood sculpture is like a nibbling mouse gnawing a hole in a wall') but, because it is Moore telling you, from the heights of that exemplary career, it is all safe and sure. The thing came right in the end or was lightly tossed aside as an aberration. 'Others like Gabo and Hepworth have gone on doing it,' he said of the stringed sculptures of the late Thirties which he abandoned at the beginning of the Second World War; 'it becomes a matter of ingenuity rather than a fundamental human experience.' He was surely right. But it is just his being so often right, so sane, so fully developed as an artist that makes it difficult to recapture the ruin and chaos, the waste land in which and out of which he formed his art.

Moore made sense of the first half of the 20th century. Of course he did it in purely sculptural terms, but since art, as he himself pointed out, has been a key part of every known human civilisation, that was no merely marginal achievement. During his first two years as a student at Leeds School of Art, after he had returned from fighting in the First World War, he immediately saw the deadness of 19th-century academic drawing and took against the reproductions of classical sculpture that were put before him as the ideal. He found the alternatives as soon as he settled in London and visited France. There were the sculptures of all the other world cultures and there were the works of Cezanne and Renoir leading on to the modernists (Picasso, Brancusi, Gaudier), who had already begun to assimilate non-European or proto-European cultures.

His visit to Italy in 1925 threw him back on his haunches a bit, since he had tended to dismiss Renaissance sculpture with classical and found that he couldn't. Nor, for that matter, once he had seen the real thing — rather than its poor copies, with their outlines blurred by frequent whitewashing — could he seriously dismiss classical sculpture. Much of the rest of his career was spent reconciling these disparate traditions in his own work. The result was not so much to draw all the traditions together as to enrich and for the time being revitalise the European tradition.

But there was a further element that went into his work from about 1930 on. It was connected to his study of ritualistic sculpture from non-European sources as well as to the organic abstract tendencies in Modernism and it first surfaced in a surrealistic stone piece, 'Composition' (1931), much influenced by Picasso. This element, however, was essentially personal to Moore, native and, I suspect, at times alarming. Its forms derived from nature — rocks, pebbles, bones, etc. — and Moore always stressed that he wanted to catch the sense of organic growth and pressure from within. But there was something inchoate, monstrous, unnaturally distorted about the way these forms were blended and developed. They came, surely, from desires, uncertainties and pressures within Moore and the new world he was part of as much as from those within the slow and ancient processes of nature.

When people objected — and they once did almost universally and still do pretty frequently — to the holes, minimal heads, breaks, asymmetries, weird protuberances and all the rest of the characteristic Moore repertoire, it was because they recognised immediately that these were not just formal devices and explorations of sculptural space, but also expressions of damage and disturbance. And Moore, who could never

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reject yet another proffered honorary degree and was always sensitive to shifts in taste and style, could hardly have failed to be disturbed still further by his public vilification. After the Second World War and the popularity of his shelter drawings he responded by including a considerable degree of naturalism in his sculptural mixture and was especially naturalistic when working on commissions for churches, as if he knew that churchgoers could not bear very much reality.

Most of the obituarists have stressed Moore's humanism and those who are keen to convert the doubters always play up the optimism, nobility, tranquility and rolling landscape connotations of his work. But the deformities and disruptions are really more obvious and, if we ever lose sight of them altogether, we shall have turned Moore and his great melting-pot of forms into the wrong sort of monument. □

CINEMA

Hit & mystery

Adam Mars-Jones

Betty Blue (18)
Screen on the Hill, Gate Notting Hill, Cannon Tottenham Court Road
Mona Lisa (18)
Odeon Haymarket

IF BY SOME accident the colour leaked out of every film image that invented a mysteriousness for women, there would be a lot of drained celluloid about and not much left of this week's films, *Betty Blue* and *Mona Lisa*. Both films are made by directors with form (Jean-Jacques Beineix made *Diva*, Neil Jordan *The Company of Wolves*), but both plunge heavily, and as if for the first time, on that old Eternal Feminine.

The lead actors of **Betty Blue**, as we notice when we join them, have not waited. They have started without us and are treating themselves to a matched pair of orgasms. The scene ends with a post-coital voice-over: *I had known Betty for a week. We had made love every night. The weather forecast was for storms.*

The expected flashback never shows up. No reference is ever made to their meeting, or to their lives before they met. Formal daring, I hear you say. Well, maybe, but one man's formal daring is another man's flagrant copout. Every film has its own conventions, of course, but the relationship between Zorg (Jean-Hughes Anglade) and Betty (Béatrice Dalle) is the be-all and end-all of this one, and there's something a bit odd about having to take it on trust. Beineix is a car salesman who won't let you look under the bonnet.

His style is looser here than in *Diva* but that isn't an advantage. If nothing in your temperament responds to the raw or the unforeseen, it's sensible to stick with perfection, however airless. In *Diva*, everything was calculated; it was filmed in the graduated smoky blues of the Gitanes packet and had its own silly sort of integrity. It was difficult to miss what wasn't there (though there was plenty). In *Betty Blue* the tenuous story drifts sideways from interesting location to interesting location, from one offbeat character to another, without any sense of progress.

A couple are lovers. He is exploited by his employer; she is aggressive on his behalf. She finds a stack of black notebooks in which he has written a novel. (We learn neither its title nor anything about it. It is a literary McGuffin to match the sexual McGuffin.) She sets fire to the shack where they live and off they go to Paris to get him published, since he is a genius. They stay with an old friend of Betty's. Publishers send offensive rejection slips. The girlfriend's boyfriend's mother dies and they go to her funeral in the provinces and stay behind to run the family piano shop.

We don't see them selling pianos, a task for which they have no possible qualifications. For Beineix a piano is, in essence, a big lustrous box; give him a chance to film a room full of big lustrous boxes, and that is happiness enough for him.

The gimmick that goes with the McGuffins is that Betty is not so much a free spirit as a psychopath. Her rages will soon alienate even audiences whose critical faculties are paralysed by films where the characters drink coffee out of bowls. When people have no past and no social context, however rudimentary, derangement becomes the nearest possible approach to depth. *Betty Blue* treats mental illness as a sort of chic.

Betty puts her own eye out. Zorg, cross-dressed to gain access to the hospital, tenderly smothers her. But he's writing again. So that's all right.

Mona Lisa's story of obsession is much less preposterous. George (Bob Hoskins), a recently released convict, is employed to act as chauffeur to the young prostitute Simone (Cathy Tyson). He falls in love with her and she becomes fond of him; but she, in turn, is obsessed with finding and saving another young prostitute called Cathy, whose drug habit prevented her from breaking away from her pimp as Simone did. She gets George to conduct a search on her behalf.

Tyson in particular is remarkable and Hoskins gets good mileage out of a character who, offered fake champagne in a strip-joint but spotting a girl through a bead curtain putting a kettle on, asks if there's any chance of a cup of tea. London is transformed, as promised, into a malevolent phantasmagoria of images. But there still seems something forced about the whole enterprise. Simone is labelled 'prostitute' but we don't see her doing anything carnal except in an old video she was forced to make. Even trussed up for a bondage scene in the Ritz, she takes hardly more chances sartorially than most strollers on the King's Road. Consequently, she can be seen as both the Bad Woman and the Good Woman and the whole world of sexual exploitation becomes only a lurid backdrop to her embodiment of the two typologies.

The film is a thriller and has some effective moments, but suffers by comparison with American originals. Its plot, for one thing, has echoes of various rather tougher films (*Taxi Driver, The Hardcore Life*) and, in any case, thrillers with a British setting tend to seem

BILLBOARD

Book Signing

MAYA ANGELOU, in Britain for the publication of her new volume of autobiography, '**THE HEART OF A WOMAN**' (Virago, £3.95), will be signing books at Grassroots Bookstore, 71 Golborne Road, Ladbroke Grove, London W10 on Saturday 27 September from 12 noon to 1 p.m.

Ad bookings:
Call Laura Berryman
01-253 2001

Theatre

BLOOMSBURY THEATRE 01-387 9629. Mon-Sat 8 p.m. **HULL TRUCK THEATRE COMPANY** in **CRAMP**. 16-19 September Mats. *Molecule Theatre of Science for Children* presents the **PATENT OFFICE ROBBERY**.

NATIONAL THEATRE 01-928 2252 Olivier (open stage) **THE THREEPENNY OPERA**. Lyttelton (proscenium stage) **THE MAGISTRATE**. Cottesloe (small auditorium) **NEAPTIDE, THE BAY AT NICE/WRECKED EGGS.** See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 01-928 2256.

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tame because of the shortage of guns. It's a small price to pay, weakened genre movies for safer streets, but it damages British films that attempt American territory.

The film switches its action to Brighton, varying its locations at the expense of a sustained mood (a mistake it shares with *Betty Blue*). Simone turns out not to be in love with George — but we knew that anyway — and he ends up being viewed as a tragic figure for emotions he has actually imposed on other people. The approved defence of films like this — from people who are embarrassed at enjoying so whole-heartedly something that is essentially the mixture as before — is to say they aren't claiming to be about women, only about men's fantasies about women. But you don't need to take that too seriously. I bet the press kit for *Casablanca* said that too. □

MUSIC

Let us pay

Jon Savage

It's not just record shops that have changed, but the people drawn there to worship

IT'S DIFFICULT to think of the new type of supermarket — or, in today's hyperbolic language, Hypermarket, Megastore — except (to borrow a famous metaphor) in terms of a cathedral. There is the same expanse of space, carefully designed to take you out of everyday life and to put you into a trance; there is the same communality and anonymity that is so soothing. Yet, in these modern temples, the pay-off is different: the feelings that arise in these environments — which are pleasantly neurotic rather than tranquil — can only be resolved by consumption.

The big new trend in record retailing is toward this kind of religious experience. Last month, Tower Records — a well-known American chain — opened its flagship megastore in the old Swan and Edgar building at the heart of Piccadilly Circus. Seven 'separate' shops within one building, it follows in the wake of the successful Virgin Megastore (reopened in November 1985) and prefigures the new £2.5 million HMV building in the centre of Oxford Street. These three stores will dominate the central London market: elsewhere in the country, the local record shop has all but disappeared, replaced by country-wide chains like Virgin and Our Price.

Buying records has become as streamlined, as corporatised, as the production of the music that is on sale. It is a feature of this new development that the result is convenient, exciting and compulsive. The new megastores represent a more active approach on the part of the music industry — doing very nicely, thank you, but ever concerned about the downward curve — to woo custom. Their orientation, as befits current trends in capitalism, is exclusive.

These new megastores don't sell records; they sell lifestyles. Both Tower and Virgin offer not only records but CDs, audio and video tapes, magazines, food, books and some hardware, in a seamless consumer environment where credit cards go crazy. There is some individuation. Virgin has better decor — the muted, dove-grey colour scheme having a correctly hushed tone — and you can buy plane tickets; Tower is more aggressive about the CDs and (a nice touch, this, very Californian hippie) Natural Pine cassette racks. Yet both rely heavily on the fetishised object — serried ranks of records encased in see-through plastic — and the delirious splendour of the latest 12" megamix, which acts as such a perfect accompaniment.

Who are these new temples aimed at ? People who can afford the entrance fee, that's who. The range of products, their expense and sophistication is a far cry from the singles bar: like the CD, the megastore is not aimed at the teenager but the 25-45 year old mature consumer. This is by now ingrained music industry policy: as the BPI Yearbook for 1986 notes, in an even terser warning, 'the depressing effect of unemployment on discretionary expenditure has serious repercussions for the record industry. Confronted by the twin threat of youth unemployment and the declining number of teenagers, [it] will need to direct its marketing strategies accordingly'.

Keystone

Buying discs before the music died

This frank concentration on a more privileged section of the population at the expense of another violates the democratic illusion that has been at the heart of post-war society. A great attraction of the American-style consumer capitalism that we have so thoroughly assumed has been its promise, so

RECORDS

High Priest of Love
ZODIAC MINDWARP & THE LOVE REACTION *Food* WARP 1
Zodiac Mindwarp are the new style-industry plaything: a piss-take of the much stressed self-indulgence of the late Sixties. Like most of these concepts, they remain a wonderful after-dinner joke — I bet it took them most of their time to come up with the name and the biker image — totally spoiled in the translation to product. *High Priest of Love* gets the good stuff over with first: after a ten-second burst of guitar noise (which sounds, of course, just like a Harley Davidson) the six songs degenerate instantly into turgid cock-rock, where they remain for the next 25 minutes. If this was done by any bad heavy-metal group, no one would notice. What Zodiac Mindwarp are really about — despite their fundamental misreading of a complicated period — is the style industry's attempt to get to grips with the late Sixties. I could suggest, more profitably, a few good books.

In Between Every Line
ROY HARPER *EMI* EN 5004
If Zodiac had done their homework instead of mindwarping, they might have realised that this was much more the sound of that period. Roy Harper even recorded an ode to 'Hells Angels'. At the same time as his material from the very early Seventies is being reissued, Harper crops up back on EMI with a double live album. This sounds like a recipe for self-indulgence, but the ferocity and concentration of Harper's vision carry the day. Best side is the segue of 'One Man Rock 'n' Roll Band' and 'Hangman', where the anger in his lyrics is poeticised by some extraordinary guitar playing.

Kicking Against the Pricks
NICK CAVE AND THE BAD SEEDS *Mute* STUMM 28
During the last two years, there has been an attempt in pop to get 'back to the roots'. This is a suspicious enterprise, which entirely fails to recognise the fact that pop's power lies precisely in its synthetic quality. There is some talismanic power to be found in musical sources, but only if reinterpreted to suit the present day. *Kicking Against The Pricks* collates 12 diverse songs — from the Velvet Underground's 'All Tomorrow's Parties' to Jim Webb's 'By The Time I Get To Phoenix' — into a successful restatement of darkness and dread. Why becomes clear when you look at the record's make-up: Australian, English and West German avant-garde pop musicians reinterpreting American country-pop and blues. Their skewered, sparse approach turns even the schlock of 'The Carnival Is Over' — a hit for the Seekers in 1965 — into an ode to loss.

Life's Rich Pageant
R.E.M. *IRS* import
Of all the people attempting a similar feat in the USA — a phenomenon parlayed last year into a hideous musical 'movement' — only R.E.M. have any authority. *Life's Rich Pageant*, their fourth album, cleans up their mixture of jangling, circular songs and mystical, muffled lyrics. R.E.M.'s debt to the Sixties is profound, but transcended by an overpowering sense of vision. Unlike other four-piece white rock bands, R.E.M. remain gender unspecific — quite androgynous indeed — which eases their attempts to turn a new American loss (and identity) into archetype.

Jon Savage

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subversive of traditional class structures, that anyone could participate. Yet now, as Barbara Ehrenreich observes in her 1983 study of the family, *The Hearts of Men*: 'From the marketing outlook of the eighties, it does not seem to matter whether every family has the income to maintain a moderate level of consumption; it matters only that *some* households have the income to consume at a level of gluttony.'

There are many theories about the identities and pleasures that can be conferred by consumption — and they are useful — but they all assume a democratic promise that has been reneged upon. After all, the megastore is an exclusive church: what is now interesting is how the new type of leisure consumption reinforces the new class divisions, which are no less powerful and no less brutal than the old.

TELEVISION

No job

Diana Eden

LIFE BEING SHORT on laughs just now, in downtown Wandsworth, I flicked between the channels in search of surrogate mirth. Some hope. When September is upon us and the nights a-drawing in, next to the mournful call of migrating geese the most dispiriting sound of autumn is doctored-laughter deathrattling out from dying sitcoms.

Two new series pivot on the illusion that northern working-class redundancy, by definition, is a romp. The first, writer Geoff Rawley's **We'll Think of Something** (ITV) merits the warning postscript: 'But It Won't Be A Funny Line'. Situation comedy works best when rooted in reality; this one is embedded in a mildewed compost inviting odorous comparisons. The hero, a laid-off factory hand, echoes, but only dismally and dimly, Yosser's erstwhile insistence, 'I could do that job.' There are several witless sidekicks evoking *The Last of the Summer Wine* and a busybody neighbour recalling Mollie Sugden (I know, I know, just when we had managed to forget her). In short, practically everything is there apart, that is, from humour.

It appears that Alan Bleasdale's brilliance and, come to think of it, Carla Lane's, may be answerable for much. **Help** (BBC 1), written by Joe Boyle and featuring three young unemployed-but-hopefuls, seemed sired by *Boys From The Blackstuff* out of *Liverbirds*, but it, also, left the starting gate unsteadily and fell at the first fence. NB to writers from a reviewer born and bred in Durham: comedies set north of the Wash are not necessarily dead certs. Even when delivered in those quaint, *hilarious* accents, an unfunny line is an unfunny line. There is, perhaps, a superb comedy to be wrought from the state of regional unemployment. But neither of these was it.

I have a fancy that comedy acting is, largely, one of Nature's gifts. Some are born great-timers, some achieve great-timing and some couldn't have great-timing thrust upon them were it hurled down with velocity from the clock-face of Big Ben. And comedy itself — like its close companion, sex — is essentially subjective. Having been long in love with wise-cracks and one-liners, for me American writers carry infinite appeal. They are certainly prolific. The casts of *Mash*, *Hill Street Blues*, *Cheers*, *Golden Girls* and *Rhoda* can throw the gags away with a casual, easy grace, confident that dozens more will spring whence the others came.

Sadly, it was the once-trusty team of Esmonde and Larbey who tried to persuade us, via **Brush Strokes** (BBC1), that a philanderer is a philanthropist misjudged. Their cockney Casanova may *seem* just another run-of-the-moll, leg-over merchant but, really, he reveres, nay, he *worships* women. His altruistic motives were hammered heavily across when the parfait gentil Knight, this hapless victim of his own compulsive adoration, lyricised about a traffic warden's eyes and then — wait for it girls — held to his opinion even though the lumpen ingrate served him with a ticket! Soon, our combination of saint and socialworker was piling compliments upon a geriatric broiler who was all of *43*! So, faith in men restored and an armistice in the sex war declared, we could chortle with approval as he dashed, like a demented tomcat, between the lucky women he had sweetly double-dated. Jesus, what a *prince* . . . There is, perhaps, a superb comedy to be wrought from the state of satyriasis. But I doubt it.

By far the most engaging humour of the last few weeks was that contained in Melanie Chait's gentle documentary **Veronica 4 Rosie** (C4). In this welcome repeat, women between the ages of 16 and 23 discussed, with candid wit, the joys and tribulations of being young and gay. I listened in admiration and older-sisterhood and with some sense of despair — for being middle-aged and heterosexual is, likewise, not a guarantee of bliss.

Well folks, that is it. And double golly-gosh, almost no bad language. I content myself, instead, by simply swearing this: when Parliament reconvenes so, too, does the hottest comedy on the box. If you feel that the fabric of society is crumbling outwards from within your very parlour, then **Their Lordships House** (C4) will reassure and amuse. The inaction takes place at an opulent day-centre for the aged. Panning lovingly across the historic Upper Chamber, the camera closes in on Hailsham, an actor blessed with such facial impassivity that it is hard to discern whether he be moved beyond all measure or these several hours deceased. And what a spiffing script! Must-encrusted buffers shamble to their feet, reciting comic monologues about sub-post offices, industry and rape. It could all have flowed wet from dear old Trollope's quill. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*, as we say in Wandsworth, or rather we look it up and say it when we're writing for the *Statesman*. But remember now, this is one situation comedy that will *really* make you laugh. Unless it makes you weep.

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Window pain

Naseem Khan

I'VE BEEN IN some pretty uncomfortable spots for Work in Progress, but I must say that this takes the biscuit. Here I am sitting on the kerb, at night, in the rain in Spitalfields. It is rather cold. What, you might ask, am I — and forty or so more people — doing here?

Essentially, eavesdropping. We're here to see what's going on behind the lighted windows of Number 17, by courtesy of Housewatch, the organisation that takes over houses and creates 'events' that can only be viewed from the outside.

It's very silent in Princelet Street, and dark (Housewatch have managed to get the streetlights turned off). Eyes are fixed firmly on No 17. Its eight windows seem ever so slightly to shimmer, but, otherwise, it's as dead-looking as the flanking terrace houses: handsome houses, early 18th-century, with three regular windows on first and second floors, two windows and the front door on the ground floor. Handsome, but decayed. And very quiet.

Then it begins. A fragmented soundtrack like scratch video: clipped, repeated snatches of half-heard music, over and over. The windows suddenly acquire brightly coloured words — Wall; Window; Floor — projected from inside onto each. Hints of Hindi-musical songs creep in and window blinds, now different colours, fly up and down independently. On one window a large figure — a negative image — climbs up and down, up and down, a ladder. The electronic music increases its fractured pace. Human silhouettes like daguerreotypes appear and pose briefly at windows. There is percussion now, like a tabla, on the sound track. Then it ends. 'Pedestrian Colours', Tony Sinden's 13-minute film/sound piece, is over. It is the first of six pieces to be shown that night by the six members of Housewatch, who have recently, under the aegis of the Artangel Trust, been projecting their work onto three very different houses in different parts of London.

Housewatch may be the generic name for the project, but the components are greatly dissimilar. There is no house style. Of the five I saw, only Ian Bourn's busily social 'Good Value Cafe' used 17 Princelet Street directly as a house. The following, more mysterious film, Lulu Quinn's 'Ancestors', had no perceivable narrative thread. A loud insistent storm-like soundtrack was juxtaposed with the clear singing voices of chilren. Meanwhile, on the windows, a series of images of Amerindian ritual masks and skulls, in rich colours, flashed quickly by.

A few of the artists used the street as well as the house. George Saxon's final 'The House That Jack Built' began with Jack the Ripper in Victorian dress coming up the street into the house. Alison Winckle's 'The Yellow Room — Her Story' swathed the front of No. 17 with billows of smoke from a smoke machine on the doorstep. Her house was a scene of female drudgery. 'Out, damned spot. Out, I say!' declares a woman's voice over and over again. Sounds and images of furious scrubbing change to shots of sewing. 'A stitch in time saves nine,' repeats the voice, emerging from a babble of background sound. But the frenzied activity does not continue. At a certain point, the worm turns. Large fingers unpick seams. 'That's got rid of that,' says the disembodied voice. Quick, moving colours follow, accompanied by swelling music. Finally it all stops dead. A rather tuneless, female voice sings, 'I'm gonna wash that house right out of my hair . . . '

As the pieces continued, so did the drizzle outside the house; darkness steadily deepened. The wise had brought umbrellas (which didn't improve general visibility). The rest of us made do with dustbin liners handed out by an anonymous well-wisher. It wasn't so bad during the films, since all of them had an intrinsic interest, but, during the waiting between them, you did start to notice the drips down the neck, the empty beercans rolling round frozen feet.

This was also the time when you started to ask yourself why this was necessary. What did the street situation add to the films? *Trompe l'oeil* didn't feature: there was never any way in which audience or passers-by could have believed that they were seeing extraordinary events through the windows of an ordinary house. The eight windows of No. 17 were essentially eight large video screens. Whether this challenged, as the publicity claimed, 'conventional preconceptions regarding cinema, television, art and architecture' was open to question.

The possibilities are certainly fascinating. Houses and areas come with all sorts of associations (warmth, comfort) and a street audience is very different to one in a gallery. But the films did not always make use of the ambiguous and vulnerable quality of their pavement audience.

The exception (though I had retreated wet through before George Saxon's final event had finished) was Chris White's 'Full Fathom' (9½ minutes) which managed to impose an overall mood. On the doorstep a dark figure played the violin wistfully. In the windows cascades of water and images of waterfalls ran down, changing to handwritten signs, with sound of water increasingly running as they became sodden. It was an eerie, lovely event that gained by its location rather than being — as some of the others could easily have been — just as effective in the dryer comfort of the Midland Group or The Fridge.

Next week: international women's theatre at Magdalena '86

THEATRE

Family ways

Victoria Radin

The House of Bernarda Alba
LORCA *Lyric, Hammersmith*
Woman in Mind
ALAN AYCKBOURN *Vaudeville Theatre*

ONE OF THE MOST dramatic moments at the first night of **The House of Bernarda Alba** occurred when Nuria Espert, the great Spanish woman of the theatre and director of this English production, came on stage for the curtain call. There she stood, at 51, radiant and vital, her hair long and streaming, her black dress split above the knee and down the back.

As she linked hands with the 12 British actresses who play the members of one of the most life-denying households in classical drama (bar Strindberg), I was probably not the only member of the audience to feel a little cheated. The matriarch Bernarda and her five tyrannised spinster daughters are meant, in varying ways and degrees, to symbolise the life force denied and subjugated, dampened and deformed. But had we been given any real evidence that the life force had ever existed in these women? It will take more than one production by a great, female, foreign theatre director to throw out years of our own dampening mannerism and bashfulness.

Nevertheless, on its own terms and for nearly all the way, this is a moving and handsome production which looks as if it belongs to the current European tradition of theatre. Ezio Frigerio, who designed the sets, and Franca Squarciapino, who did the costumes, have both worked in Italy with Giorgio Strehler and the white-washed, fortress-like edifice of Bernarda's house offers a peculiarly European blend of realism and expressionism most appropriate to this play. Lorca himself called it a 'photographic document', from which he felt he had expunged all elements of lyricism: which he did and he didn't.

It is certainly a wilfully ugly play, with no notes of love or tenderness and only an occasional wisp of amiability. Bernarda Alba, mistress of the richest house in a small Andalusian village, has just been widowed. She can now invoke her tyrannical respect for propriety to the full, sentencing her daughters to eight years' sequestered mourning within the gates of the house and blinding herself to the romance — and probable affair — of her youngest daughter with the fiancé of the eldest and richest. Tragedy erupts from this callous suppression of reality but all Bernarda can find to say about the suicide of her daughter of 20 is that she died a virgin.

Many Lorca commentators have seen Bernarda's despotism as the author's analogue to the encroaching Fascism which was responsible for his murder in 1936, some months after he wrote this play; but such an attitude explains the harshness rather than the

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subject. Lorca was a homosexual who wrote very feelingly about women who were denied their womanhood, and was particularly gripped by 'that grotesque and moving spectacle, an old maid in Spain'. Here there are five of them and three widows. With no private, non-rational, easing, erotic love about, the household becomes a vicious prison of hypocrisy and secretiveness, in which all the members — from Bernarda, thwacking her daughters, to the maid, striking a beggar woman — try to establish a pecking order made up of nothing better than social convention. As the social conventions themselves were established by men, and as the unseen fiancé Pepe is the real ruler of this roost, the spectacle we see is one of slaves enslaving themselves further and adopting the measures of their masters with even greater brutality.

The process is deforming and the big image that one carries away from this production is one of women travestying themselves. Clothed in their black weeds, all the sisters are ungainly: Julie Legrand's eldest, over-sized and loping, has a hint of the pantomime dame, while Deborah Findlay's waspish and physically twisted Martirio, lame and glittery-eyed, echoes Richard III. Amanda Root as the youngest almost suggests a young, passionate girl driven to suicide; Joan Plowright's housekeeper is shrewd, if not quite earthy. Over all of them stands, ramrod-straight and often (and puzzlingly) with her back to us, Glenda Jackson's Bernarda; a compelling and intelligent portrait but one which seems to reveal, as Lorca never quite did, that the tyrant's viciousness is the product of her own inner demons. It makes her more palatable, but I never quite believed it.

While I travel with tight mouth the terrain of Alan Ayckbourn's tight-arsed suburban archetypes, I enjoy his expeditions into more exotic quarters. In **Woman in Mind** he travels to the bottom of the garden and there finds fairies, madness and — what I don't normally find in his work — imaginative sympathy. His portrait of Susan, wife of a provincial vicar and mother of a son (this is how she once would have been happy to describe herself) crawls right inside her mind. Much of the time what we see are her hallucinations as she calls forth (before they begin calling themselves forth) a family of idealised phantoms who, unlike the folk in her house, seem to dote on her utterly.

It would be easy to criticise the banality of her dream-life, with its sexy and slightly younger husband who is also a great cook, her charming and totally confiding daughter and their rich life of tennis court, swimming pool and nearly constant kindness. But I think we all share these reveries; men dream of beautiful blondes who don't answer back. Although Susan's garrulously insensitive husband (Martin Jarvis), her incompetent sister-in-law (Josephine Tewson) and, to a lesser extent, her unloving son (Daniel Flynn) and flustered doctor (Peter Blythe) are more the stuff of Ayckbourn's own familiar belittling hallucinations of English life, in Susan, and in Julia McKenzie's perfectly judged and quite harrowing performance, he has created a greatly appealing Everywoman, who shall haunt me for some time. □

Comic stripped

Oliver Harris

Rex Features

The Almost Unpublished Lenny Bruce
ed. KITTY BRUCE *Running Press*
dist. *Fourth Estate* £5.95

IT IS A sobering thought, but, if Lenny Bruce were alive today, he would be 60 years old. Dirty Lenny, who was put on trial for saying those Dirty Words and who tirelessly insisted that the only dirty thing that you can do to a body is kill it: 'Hiroshima was dirty. Chessman was dirty.' Given the unrelenting brutality of the 20 years since his own death, his presence today would be an embarrassment, a sad monument to history's habit of turning tragedy into farce by its failure to listen.

Lenny Bruce was one of the two great founding fathers of modern performing comedy. He established the rules, after the much-neglected Lord Buckley had broken the old ones. Together, Bruce and Buckley combined the burlesque idioms of Jewish and black underground culture, opening show business to the world of the Hipster — before Norman Mailer upped the intellectual ante by dubbing him the existentialist White Negro.

Defining a comedian as 'someone who thinks on his feet and swings', Bruce's routines, improvised like jazz and barbed with Yiddish argot, haven't dated or lost their cutting edge. While, in retrospect, his attitude towards women betrays the half-baked sexism of the Sixties, the clear anti-racist stance and sharp exposure of hypocrisy still hurts where it hits: 'Every German you talk to loved the Jews, and they're all dead . . . Liberal schmiberal. Um, hm.' And that is why he was labelled 'sick'. Not because of his obscenity or blasphemy, but because, unlike 'wholesome' contemporaries such as Mort Sahl and Tom Lehrer, he meant business. Classic sketches like 'Religions Incorporated' and 'Just How Do You Relax Coloured People at Parties?' showed that here was a spiritual hustler, a patriot, a *meschugenah*, whose offensiveness was more than semantic-deep.

He opened the gates for the likes of Alexi Sayle, Rik Mayal and Richard Pryor to follow

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through. But comparisons seem meaningless. In 1962 he made his only ever appearance on stage in England at Peter Cook's club, The Establishment, and his act must have made *Beyond the Fringe* look very tame indeed. He was never allowed back in this country and, after only five years at the top, the police and the courts started to close in mercilessly. Compared to the time bomb placed under Bruce, Richard Pryor is sitting on a whoopee-cushion.

An unhealthy posthumous theology attached itself to Bruce's martyrdom, creating the monstrous hagiography of St Lenny who was crucified for our sins. The grain of truth in Phil Spector's verdict, that he died of an overdose of police, was unfortunate. He was surely a willing victim: not so much a butterfly broken on a wheel as a would-be Christ figure in search of a Passion Play. Whether he fell or was pushed is academic at this distance but, as Jonathan Miller once astutely noted, Bruce didn't realise the extent to which, while his enemies attacked from the front, his friends were covertly using him as a stalking-horse for middle-class liberal dares. To Kenneth Tynan he was, in a memorable phrase, 'a pearl miscast before swine'.

As for his daughter's collection of material, *The Almost Unpublished Lenny Bruce*, little is likely to be new to aficionados and it makes a rather weak general introduction. After a foreword that makes you cringe, complete with 'restless fires' burning in father's soul, it mostly cobbles together reprinted extracts from Paul Krassner's satirical magazine *The Realist*, while many of the best pieces can be found in either *How to Talk Dirty* or *The Essential Lenny Bruce*. What remains ranges from an enjoyable Studs Terkel interview to an atrocious children's drama called 'Timmy and Algernon in the Forrest'. There are some good one-liners and fine photographs, but the material of most interest is probably the handful of letters. These are wonderful, and a whole volume would certainly be worthwhile.

But this selection is far from the vintage Bruce fresh from the secret archives promised in the title. Indeed, it is hardly a book at all, rather a glorified 'fanzine' with a most irritating marker pen highlighting various sections of typeface in swathes of pink. Like even the better compilations, it is a poor substitute for Lenny's voice live on record. □

Karl & co

Nicholas Jacobs

Little Germany: Exile and Asylum in Victorian England
ROSEMARY ASHTON *Oxford* £17.50

WHAT LONDON PUBLISHER's wrote, nearly 20 years after Marx's *Capital* was published in German, that it 'was not disposed to entertain' publication of an English translation? Ashton's book is not only the first to make full use of the new English-language edition of Marx and Engels' works and correspondence, but also quotes from letters written to them and their associates (in the above case, the letter was from Macmillan & Co to a friend of Marx).

Rosemary Ashton's highly satisfying study is not limited to the Marx circle, but, as its focus is on the refugees and exiles of the failed revolution of 1848 — that turning point in European history, as Trevelyan put it, when history failed to turn — Marx, Engels and their colleagues and rivals inevitably provide the major part of the cast. With apt and sometimes very funny quotations from one of Marx's least known satirical pamphlets, she summarises the bitter political quarrels that characterised the German exile community: between the 'Swotters' around Marx, who believed that long-term theoretical and political preparation had to be made before further calls for revolution could be effective, and that the time was anyway not yet ripe, and the 'Plotters', centred on the Willich/Schapper group, for whom 'it' — the Revolution — was about to 'start' at any moment.

In her first book, *The German Mind*, Rosemary Ashton studied the influence of German philosophy and literature on leading Victorian figures. In this reciprocal study she illustrates the impact and influence of Britain, its politics and national culture (or apparent lack of it), on a group of formidable Germans, some of whom, like Marx, Engels, the poet Freiligrath and the social democrat Wilhelm Liebknecht (father of Karl), were to play an important role in their own country and far beyond.

She is particularly good on the Germans' almost total incomprehension of the British class system and its social and cultural ramifications. This, she argues and convincingly illustrates, was true of Marx and Engels as well and can help us understand some of their mistaken judgments and expectations. Her book is also illuminating in recording the earliest responses, in hitherto little or unknown letters and articles, of the English recipients of personal and review copies of Marx's *Capital*.

Rosemary Ashton has pursued her subjects — who, like most exiles, became widely dispersed — to libraries throughout Britain, to New York, to East and West Germany, and as far as Cracow. She has distilled this research to make an instructive, thoughtful and, above all, entertaining and thoroughly readable book. □

Nicholas Jacobs is on the editorial committee of the English Language edition of the works of Marx and Engels.

From her sickbed

Michael Bayley

Tobacco clouds moving
slowly across the globe
in the corner of his study,

watched through a door
left open just wide enough
so he might hear her call.

FICTION

Island stories

Harriett Gilbert

Foe
J. M. COETZEE *Secker* £9.95
The Hottentot Room
CHRISTOPHER HOPE *Heinemann* £9.95

'THE MAN SQUATTED down beside me. He was black: a Negro with a head of fuzzy wool . . . the flat face, the small dull eyes, the broad nose, the thick lips . . . ' Does J.M. Coetzee, white South African, know what he does to a lefty, white Brit with sentences and phrases like those? Does he accurately guess at the stabbing of sweat as blackness is stripped of its politics, the nervous waiting for a topical message, a graspable political statement?

Most probably, he couldn't give a damn. Coetzee writes inside his own country (even when his *Life & Times of Michael K* won the 1983 Booker Prize, he refused to come out to play with the British gliterati) and seems to have no desire to collude with our simplifying — our reduction of everything from or about South Africa to black-white duality. The squatting black man in **Foe** isn't even South African. He's Friday, companion-servant-slave to the 18th-century castaway, Robinson Crusoe, on whose island our narrator Susan Barton has recently been washed ashore. Post-modern games while Soweto burns? Yes, but spine-pricking, haunting ones.

By introducing a woman to Daniel Defoe's bastion of maleness, Coetzee not only multiplies the earlier novel's possibilities, but releases his own from that tug-of-war in which everyone, surely, must by now know which side they're on. The madness of Boer-style colonialism is certainly *part* of *Foe*'s subject: besides his obvious position as master, Coetzee's Crusoe, unlike the original, refuses to rescue from the wreck of his ship any of those tools that might make his island more civilised; his energies are spent constructing terraces which, to Susan's baffled distress, obscure the natural beauty of the island and on which, besides, there is nothing to plant; and Crusoe desires neither rescue nor escape from this sterility, dying of something like a broken heart when the ship that eventually *does* turn up is three days away from Bristol. Not only, however, is the reader pursuaded to share Susan's complex of feelings for the man — pity as well as incomprehension, sadness as well as disgust — but, from the earliest pages on, it's obvious that the colonial theme is part of a larger concern: people's universal need to be able to tell their story.

Friday doesn't possess a tongue. He can hum, if asked, in a low, tuneless voice, but never say how he arrived at his condition, what he thinks of it, what he thinks of anything. Susan is naturally appalled by this, but no less outraged by Crusoe's failure to have kept a journal of his adventures, or to stick to one

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spoken account of them. Her obsession, when she and Friday are decanted in the streets of Enlightenment London, is to find sombody who can turn her notes into a 'proper' story, one with 'the substance of the truth'. The author on whom she settles is a Mr Foe.

The rest of this fire-flashing diamond of a novel is mainly concerned with Foe and Susan's struggle for that 'substance of the truth' — he wants to spice things up with cannibals, a musket for Crusoe, etc — while Friday, as enigmatic as ever, structures for himself a culture and religion from Foe's robes and wig, a soprano recorder, whatever he can lay his hands on: performing, in other words, those civilising acts rejected by Crusoe himself.

Other characters slip onto the pages as Susan or Foe allow, but, like the murdered ship's-master with whom Susan was originally cast away, are permitted to slip back off the margins into their own (as yet untold) stories: 'In my dream I saw him floating southward in his puny boat with the oars crossed on his breast and the ugly spike sticking out of his eye. The sea was tossed with huge waves, the wind howled, the rain beat down; yet the boat did not sink, but drifted slowly on toward the province of the iceberg, and would drift there, it seemed to me, caked in ice, till the day of our resurrection.' His prose never straining any more than that, Coetzee has written an intellectually and imaginatively enormous novel, all the more extraordinary for being a slender 157 pages. The epilogue I have read, and shall read, over and again like poetry.

The Hottentot Room, while sharing *Foe*'s concern with people's making of stories, is more straightforward, furious, specific. It's about South Africans, black and white, who find themselves exiled in contemporary London and the myths that all exiles make of their past in the desperate hope of creating some warmth to soften the ice of their present.

The 'room' of the title is a club ('There was no method of applying. You were chosen') which owes not a little to Lottie Crump's hotel in Evelyn Waugh's *Vile Bodies*. It's run by the German Frau Katie, a Jew who didn't realise she was until her Nazi Colonel husband informed her of the fact in 1938. In it, the slush of Earls Court's winter is escaped by Looper (a South African reporter, in more senses than one), by Wyngate Hossein, philandering General Secretary of Via Afrika, by Elize from Zimbabwe and her friend Mona May, a highjumper from the Bushveld who 'trained, it was said, back at home by competing against a tame springbok named Hendrik'.

Hope's satire here, as in his previous fictions, is driven by the anger that people feel when love and belief aren't quite destroyed, when they still know why they feel angry. One running gag/running wound in the novel occurs in the letters that Looper keeps getting from his right-of-President-Botha father, who's convinced not only that his son is a commie but that he's in daily, conspiratorial contact with the evil David Owen: 'Perhaps when you next see your friend, Dr Owen . . . '

It should be added that the lidless eye being cast on South Africans at home and abroad is no more blinking when it comes to the British. Our own dear form of racism, the delusion that we have a democracy, our habit of parking in laybys and 'eating sandwiches at folding tables': from start to finish we're despised. Whether at home or in frustrated exile, South Africans are producing some vital and provocative fiction. □

FICTION

Funeral in Berlin

Martin Chalmers

November 1918: A German Revolution
ALFRED DÖBLIN trans. JOHN E. WOODS
Fromm dist. *Angel Books* £16.95 (Vols 1/2) & £9.95 (Vol. 3)

NOVEMBER 1918: A German Revolution is a trilogy of novels first published between 1948 and 1950 but only now available here in this recent US translation. Over more than 1,100 pages it addresses itself, with considerable digressions, to events in Berlin between 22 November 1918 and mid-January 1919.

Readers of *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (a flawed masterpiece from which Fassbinder made one of the very greatest modern films) will suspect that Döblin would not write a conventional left-wing novel. Döblin was a radical, but his political radicalism was fused with two apparently conflicting interests, a concern with spiritual and religious experience and a concern with Freudianism (he practised as a psychiatrist in Berlin before 1933). In his literary work, he was constantly grappling with the problem of the extent to which individuals have the freedom to act or are carried along by often subconscious forces.

November 1918 largely alternates between two sets of narratives. There are sections which deal with the political world and in which Ebert, Scheidemann, Groener, Liebknecht, Radek and, briefly, Lenin are the principal actors. These sections are written with a black and scathing wit. There are dozens of memorable phrases, sentences, paragraphs — whole chapters — which should be a gold-mine for historians in search of apt summations. 'The counter-revolutionaries were far more determined to play a part in the revolution than the revolutionaries,' for example, or an interior monologue in which President Ebert worries about the correct way for a head of state to enter the Reichs Chancellery and divest himself of his coat. Döblin's wit, passion and psychological acuity, his sense of the absurd and his sureness with place and time allow him to carry off debates and discussions between historical figures.

In the second set of narratives the principal fictional and humbler characters are developed. Rosa Luxemburg passes between both and sometimes the two levels interpenetrate directly; usually the relationship is more oblique — as oblique as the city and the time allow.

I find the first volume, 'A People Betrayed', the most satisfying of the three. Perhaps because it reflects a sense of the possibilities still open in November 1918; also because the range of characters from the low life and high low-life give it some similarity to *Berlin Alexanderplatz*. The trilogy as a whole shares with this earlier novel the theme of the man returning. In *Alexanderplatz*, Franz Biberkopf is released from prison into the city; in *November 1918* the returning soldiers are released from the terrors and comradeship of the trenches. And in both cases are very much afraid. Some of the ex-soldiers can't wait to resume the certainty of uniform, others remain wanderers. Two of these returnees, Maus and Becker, are established as central characters. At the level of political events, the Social Democratic leader, Ebert, experiences set-backs and humiliations in his attempts to re-establish constitutional order and becomes increasingly involved with the old military commanders

In the second volume, 'The Troops Return', the march into Berlin of the old army turns out to be a fiasco (the soldiers melt away to their homes), but the basis is laid for new disciplined forces who will crush the continuing threat of revolution. In this volume the fate of former front-line soldier Becker assumes increasing importance. His inward struggle to find a guarantee of justice in the world's affairs ends in physical recovery, a temporary reconciliation with Catholicism, and mysticism.

The third volume, 'Karl and Rosa', includes perhaps the most powerful scenes of the whole trilogy: notably in an incident involving a

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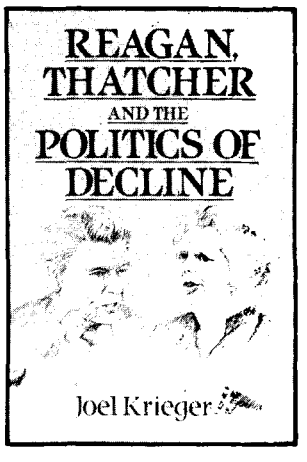

Over the past decade the United States and the United Kingdom have seen the emergence of a vital and confident conservatism, replacing the more consensual basis of politics in the immediate postwar years. Joel Krieger argues that this is a response to long-term economic decline and geopolitical influence, and assesses its importance for the future of western democracies.

224 pages, hardback £22.50
(0 7456 1272 X)
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homosexual relationship between a headmaster and a senior pupil. Becker, attempting to pick up the threads of his former civilian life as a teacher, is drawn into the affair, which climaxes during the same January days as the futile Spartacist insurrection. The future of the Weimar Republic is crystallised in this single incident. The hounding out and murder of a homosexual teacher encapsulates the rightward rush of the middle classes.

Other remarkable sections deal with the attempt to expel the grandiosely named 'People's Naval Division' from the Royal Palace on the grounds that the men are pilfering the royal linen and with the final, bloody punctuation mark of the Spartacist insurrection: the misguided defence of the newspaper offices and the police headquarters by a few thousand isolated workers and revolutionaries. Elsewhere, statues dance, chairs spin and kick, but nothing is more absurd than what happens in the streets. □

CHILDREN

Pots of message

Marsha Rowe

IN CHILDREN'S FANTASY tales, the wands, whiskers, wings and things are rarely left to themselves. Behind the allegories, the bell of morality usually tolls. So it is refreshing to find books that cock a snook. Any young reader between the ages of six and ten will enjoy **There's a Wolf in my Pudding** (Dent, £7.95) by David Henry Wilson, in which figures from fairy-tale classics reappear to tell it how it is, streetwise. Cinderella might have lived happily ever after but what about her bored coachman? Glory for a day? And why was the Prince turned into a Beast in the first place? Is there a contemporary moral here somewhere after all? Drawings by Jonathan Allen which aspire to the naive perspective of the child but which cannot avoid an adult sharpness.

The picture book by Satashi Kitamura, **When Sheep Cannot Sleep: The Counting Book** (A & C Black, £5.95), better achieves a luminous combination of innocence with wit. Not, at that price, a buy for a train ride, but a book a child will return to again and again.

Those familiar with Margaret Mahy's effervescent magical realism, in which girls and boys mix with wizards, witches (or it may be green men nimble with a needle or respectable thieves) and momentarily enter freer realms, will be more than pleased by the selection of 18 previously published stories now collected under the title **Mahy Magic** (Dent, £6.95). Full of bounce, with silvery bits of poetic language without succumbing to fuss. Which could not quite be said of **The Marzipan Pig** (Cape, £4.95) by Russell Hoban: a story, however, of charm and pink marzipan, on a base of owl eats mouse eats pig, spiced with Quentin Blake's fey and gingery cartoons.

In a more naturalistic vein, Susan Hill's **Mother's Magic** (Hamish Hamilton, £5.95), skilfully written with interesting water colour pictures by Alan Marks, shows just how much the ante-feminist tradition is alive and producing good books. In this the mother defeats the girl's quest for knowledge (mushrooms come by magic), encourages passivity (takes girl to watch boy cousin play football) and nurtures beautifully (teaches girl to let go of her anger — although after watching someone else play football all afternoon, her bored resentment, if not anger, might seem perfectly justified).

The chirpy character Chips, back in **Another Helping of Chips** (Bodley Head, £5.50), has mum around doing mum sorts of things like spring cleaning — but, with Shirley Hughes' humour, never mawkish or moony, the character of mum transcends the role, stays in the background and puts the child marvellously in the picture. An all-time favourite. **The Lonely, Only Mouse** (Dent, £5.50), is a book to cheer up any only child inclined to bemoan the fact. It's by Wendy Smith, another illustrator and author of the modern kind, who, in choosing animal characters to deal with children's experiences of family life, also introduces feminist elements with the sort of subtlety not managed ten years ago.

Also surprisingly cheerful and with self-explanatory title is **The Willow Street Kids, It's Your Right to be Safe** (Marilyn Malin/Deutsch, £5.50), in which Michele Elliott has created a fictional group of friends to deal with a series of threats over the school year from bullying to sexual abuse. Unsensationalist and unpatronising, with just the right emphasis to educate but not intimidate. Less cheerful, because there is no happy ending, is Zeynep's story of the campaign against her family's deportation to Turkey, **That Really Happened to Me . . .** (All London Teachers Against Racism and Facism, £2.50), written with teacher Brian Simons, whose lucid drawings, as well as many black-and-white photos, illustrate the book. Zeynep and her brother were both born in London and it is hard for them to understand why they have to leave. Explanations are left open.

Crises of similar impact abound in the reading books for children over seven and approaching ten. Family, fairies and mice move over. Enter rats, vampires and the Hero. Time for the Quest to begin. Unfortunately, for girls, there is only Ritchie Perry's sensible Sara, who, having packed tins of Heinz Beans to run away with, is thus nicknamed by the vampire **Fenella Fang** (Hutchinson, £5.95), with whom she shares a crypt and adventures. Fenella wears her 'very best shroud' when it is time to visit the uncle whose old eyes still twinkle 'when he sees a pretty young vampire'! For boys the choice is more exciting, although girls too would enjoy Bel Mooney's **The Stove Haunting** (Methuen, £6.95), in which Daniel, fascinated by the range uncovered in the old rectory when his family move to the West Country, is drawn back in time to become another Daniel, a kitchen boy, involved with the secret organising by agricultural workers to better their lot and faced with the dilemma: 'who is to know if things change through individual men, or through great waves, great patterns of history?'

In the story of the rats who resort to computer cunning as well as bravery and sacrifice to save their valley in **Rasco & The Rats of NIMH** (Gollancz, £6.95), this question arises earlier. Co-operation, not heoric deeds, will be necesary, is the advice of wise Nicodemus to the young Rasco; 'leaders are no more heroic than the rat who carries the grain'. In the long run, however, the young rats who dream 'of triumphs and victories', who find their minds sometimes wandering to 'heroic feats' help win the day. Girl rats, too, in this satisfying adventure of politics and conservation by Jane Leslie Conly.

But what girl would enjoy Graham Oakley's **Henry's Quest** (Macmillan, £5.95), despite or because of its smashing pics full of post-holocaust detail that leave little to the imagination? Its white hero leaps at a bit of blasé sexism whenever possible and will no doubt later on accuse his black princess of not being able to take a joke.

Of drama there is more, and more, and transformations of every kind, in Ted Hughes' rambling, shambling poem-into-prose story (to be continued) **Ffangs the Vampire Bat and the Kiss of Truth** (Faber, £5.95). The quest here is overtly one of the psyche, despite forays into parliament, the palace and TV weddings. It would, however, have been easier to accept the feminine creatures who are instrumental in this traditional odyssey of the search for truth and sight, were it not for the rather stereotyped melodrama of the illustrations. □

HORROR

Living hell

Kim Newman

COMMERCIALLY, at least, the horror field is dominated by Stephen King. His door-stopping tomes arrive at regular intervals and, when he doesn't have a new novel ready, he collates his shorter works into big, thick, value-for-money omnibus volumes, two of which now arrive simultaneously: **The Bachman Books** (NEL, £10.95) in hardback and **Skeleton Crew** (Futura, £3.50) in paperback.

These collections assemble a variety of material — some of it dating back to King's high school years — and hint that the author has almost been straitjacketed by his early successes into a form with which he might otherwise not have stuck. Along with horror, he has written science fiction and suspense/thriller stories, and there are as many echoes here of Jim Thompson and Robert Sheckley as of H.P. Lovecraft or *EC* horror comics. Had King emerged in the Fifties, before mass market acceptance of the horror novel, he could quite easily have settled down — as Richard Matheson and Robert Bloch did

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— to produce paperback original thrillers with a macabre tinge.

And that is almost what King did with the novels published under his 'Richard Bachman' pseudonym. Written anonymously for vague reasons sort-of-explained in a foreword, the four short novels assembled in *The Bachman Books* are cruder than the average 'Stephen King' book, with supercharged, linear plots and simply functional characterisations. Two, 'Rage' and 'Roadworks', are about ordinary Americans driven to Charles Whitman-style psychopathic murder sprees (obviously a favourite King theme when he's away from the fantastic; there are other examples in *Skeleton Crew* and a previous collection, *Different Seasons*) and two, 'The Long Walk' and 'The Running Man', are cynical science-fiction exercises in which citizens of a dystopian future take part in televised games during which almost all the contestants are killed. In their apparent genres, these are thoroughly conventional novels, but King's horrific bent keeps sneaking back in. Sometimes, as in the ghastly finale of 'The Long Walk' and the classroom siege of 'Rage', he even manages to recapture the raw edge of terror that some of his more complex, contrived recent horror novels have lost.

Skeleton Crew is, on the whole, a more light-hearted collection, featuring several enjoyably hokey tributes to the horror comics and monster movies of the Fifties ('The Mist', 'The Raft'), a few more-or-less straight ghost stories in the M.R. James tradition ('The Monkey', 'Uncle Otto's Truck') and even some whimsical fantasies in the spirit of the old *Unknown* magazine ('Mrs Todd's Shortcut', 'The Ballad of the Flexible Bullet'). However, there are a pair of studies of irrational violence ('Cain Rose Up' and 'Nona') that, because they have less room to psychoanalyse, are more disturbing than King's longer variations on this theme. There's also 'Survivor Type', one of the most relentlessly nasty horror stories ever written: an unemotional doctor is marooned on a barren atoll with a cache of heroin he has been smuggling and, using the drug as an anaesthetic, he amputates parts of his body for food purposes. No other horror writer could summon the ruthlessness and matter-of-fact prose to give this *conte cruel* the punch that King delivers.

In contrast to King's confident eclecticism, Christopher Fowler's **City Jitters** (Sphere, £2.50) concentrates on working a single vein — modern urban paranoia — throughout ten stories, linked by a slender prose webbing in which caricatured town councillors discuss planning problems. Although Fowler's settings are firmly rooted in the Seventies and Eighties — strip clubs, video arcades, hotel conventions — his major influence seems to be the old *Twilight Zone* series. One or two of his stories even have page-long introductions, in the clipped, lofty manner of Rod Serling, describing the central character or situation with barbed moralities and calm detachment before the horror starts. Some of Fowler's final twists are as guessable and laboured as Serling's frequently used to be but, at his best, he is capable of fine comic grue ('Perry in Seraglio', which has a wonderful Blochian pun as a resolution), plausible extrapolations of the commonplace into the horrific ('The Cleansing') and convincing ventures into mass psychosis ('Loaded Blanks'). Fowler is a new face on the horror frontier and sometimes unsure of his effects, but he has a genuine feel for unease and casual nastiness.

Two fairly similar novels — Alan Ryan's **Cast a Cold Eye** (Sphere, £2.50) and Stephen Gregory's **The Cormorant** (Heinemann, £9.50) — are very differently packaged: Ryan's book has a dour yet bloody cover and is blurbed as 'a tale of nightmares and redemption' while Gregory has a tastefully speckled dust jacket and is simply sub-titled 'A Novel'. Yet both books are classic ghost stories, with introverted narrators retreating to isolated, perhaps haunted houses in rural areas and being plagued by things from the past. Gregory, who seems to want to write a literary novel rather than a piece of generic horror, actually has the more conventional theme: a cormorant left to the narrator along with a cottage is a demonic incarnation of evil, frequently compared to a vampire bat, capable of exerting a strange fascination over the normal characters and given to startling outbursts of sharply-written violence. Ryan's author hero finds himself visited by ghosts from the Irish famine about which he's trying to write. Both novels are written in a precise but unfussy style, but Gregory manages to evoke a concentrated air of simple dread while Ryan, more ambitiously, tries to catch the aftermath of a tragedy and to find more than plain horror in his haunting. *The Cormorant* is a literary novel attempting horror, *Cast a Cold Eye* is a horror novel attempting substance: both are successful.

John Skipp and Craig Spector's **The Light at the End** (Bantam, £2.95) is an example of a brand of horror that can be expected to flourish if the genre ghetto keeps expanding. It's a classical vampire story, set in modern New York, but its re-reading of the *Dracula* plot is shot through with an awareness of the conventions being evoked. The villain is a subway graffiti artist with a misanthropic turn of mind, offhandedly vampirised by a passing monster, and the fearless vampire killers who track him down are all eccentrics who have seen enough vampire movies and read enough paperback horrors to know the rules. Written with a trashy verve, the book imports from the Eighties horror film a jokiness and a liveliness that is sometimes entertaining, but ultimately defuses any attempts to be scary. □

Apologies for the non-appearance of our promised look at Italian literature: it has been unavoidably delayed

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LETTERS

Collective security

Bruce Kent, Vice-Chair CND

Roy Hattersley (*NS* 29 August) judges that firm support for 'collective security' places him on the right of the Labour Party. I see no reason why this should be so. The only genuine 'collective security' in the world of today is Common Security which is why the late Olof Palme gave that title to his Report on Disarmament and Security first published in 1982.

In today's world, said that Report repeatedly, no one can win a nuclear war and we cannot increase our security by diminishing that of others. Despite the world's massive arsenals we continue to have illusions about the possibility of prevailing in a limited nuclear war. The risks of accident, miscalculation and escalation from regional to global conflict are all too obvious. Palme's Report listed 44 practical possible steps which the world could take on the road to genuine collective or common security. Nearly all of them still remain on the drawing board. The will to take action is lacking.

If Roy Hattersley could first redefine collective security in terms of Palme's Common Security he would speak not only for the Labour Party mainstream but for the good sense of the whole country.

Lessons of Wapping

Clifford Longley, FoC, The Times *NUJ Chapel*

Don McIntyre (*NS 22* August) is quite right that the NUJ should look very carefully where it is going. But more diligent attendance at meetings, which he urges, will not be enough. The NUJ has a structure which must be a Trotskyist militant's idea of heaven, or to put it another way, worse than a Bernard Levin nightmare.

The Times Chapel, for example, has a quorum of 30 members, and can expect two or three times that number on a good day: it is the main NUJ agency for dealing with pay and conditions for nearly 250 members. But it is technically subordinate to Farringdon Branch, one of the largest in the union.

That has a quorum of ten, and lives dangerously near the line on most occasions. Its meetings are immeasurably boring, and rarely have anything to do with bread and butter issues. But it is supposed to be the channel through which chapel members are represented in the formation of national policy, for it is the branch which sends delegates to the annual conference, and which submits resolutions and decides how to cast its delegates' votes. So policy is either made by a tiny unrepresentative clique, of quite predictable political persuasion, or on occasion by whichever large chapel decides to pack it (as my chapel and the *Sunday Times* unashamedly did this spring). Neither process has anything to do with democracy.

Far from being effective channels, in fact, such branches detach themselves from any real participation in the affairs of the national union. One of the lessons of Wapping must be that the NUJ has to learn to take chapels seriously, recognising that at least in Fleet Street it is they which attract the interest and loyalty of members.

The NUJ urgently needs a commission of enquiry into these matters, with recommendations to deal with all the obvious weaknesses in the union's rule book and structure. Otherwise there will just be more Wappings.

Shitty stuff

Peter Anghelides, Department of Theatre, Film & Television Studies, University of Glasgow

Diana Eden's television review (*NS* 29 August) told me more about Ms Eden than about television. Personal experience? Sod that. How about a spot of New Realism in your reviewing practice? You report on the inadequacies of the media elsewhere in the issue. How about a reply to W. Stephen Gilbert's attack ('Situation Critical', Edinburgh International Television Festival 1986 *Programme*) then?

> Why is the reviewing of television so ineffably, relentlessly, unapologetically, unarguably *shitty*? The critics once had — and can still have — a real influence on the modes of television because they can make analyses that are actually noted in the production offices. The criticism that scoffs at the medium merely has the self-serving function of making reviewers into media stars.

P.S. I don't want to be Ms Eden's third husband, incidentally.

Factory facts

Frank Devine, SDP PPC, Coventry SE

It was nice of Michael Meacher (*NS* 5 Sept.) to demonstrate what Roy Hattersley meant by the 'intellectual inadequacy' of the left.

Meacher asks: 'If balloting of union members is right before a strike, why isn't balloting of company employees required before big investment decisions?' The answer is that whereas trade unions are, despite some abuses, democratic organisations, companies are not.

If the left (soft or hard) is content to make simplistic and unworldly comparisons between organisations which are fundamentally different it deserves its reputation as 'never-been-in-a-factory-except-on-a-tour'.

Yes, companies can be more democratic, and more participative (trends resisted by the hard left unions and activists) but they, like good football teams, will never be fully democratic. This is especially the case when the choice is 'redundancy or closure'.

Wrongly labelled

Roger Liddle, London SE11

Roger Fox (Letters 29 August) accuses me, among others, of being a 'consistent opponent' of David Owen. Richard Gravil says I am one of the people 'most responsible for the SDP's drift to the right', demonstrating the foolishness of sticking labels on people — one of the less charming features of politics I thought I had left behind in the Labour Party.

To demand that unions have secret ballots is not right-wing; surely the whole Scargill experience demonstrates that if unions are to be strong and effective, they must be democratic and representative.

Similarly to oppose the 'lunacies' (by which I mean the betrayal of the people they are supposed to represent) of the Ted Knights of this world is common ground with many in the Labour Party. As a Lambeth councillor though, the way in which Labour's national leadership allowed decent local councillors to be manipulated by the extreme left to the point of breaking the law, was pitiful to watch.

Roger Fox appears keen to start a witch-hunt in any Party which he joins. Certainly he is right in believing that I regard the Alliance as a permanent (and unbreakable) partnership of principle with the Liberals. In my view the great majority of Social Democrats cannot see the sense of co-operating with our Liberal allies until proportional representation is achieved, then competing against them as political enemies. Instead of wasting time on introspection and a search for ideological purity, my critics should address the central strategic question — How are we going to create a *credible* alternative to the Conservatives that will tackle unemployment, poverty and social division?

Feminist distortion

Professor Lewis Nkosi, The University of Zambia

Sara Maitland misinforms your readers about my novel *Mating Birds (NS* 29 August). As many feminist reviewers have immediately recognised, my novel is not about rape. It is about the impossibility of establishing ordinary human relationships under apartheid since we can only make love *in* language.

There are two competing explanations in court as to what happened between the black man and the white woman. Like the white racist spectators in court, Sara Maitland chooses to believe the white woman's version. In so doing, it is she, not I, who sets up the false alternative between racism and sexism.

The historiography of white-dominated societies in Latin America, the Southern United States, India and South Africa is replete with examples of black men who have been lynched, mutiliated and killed as a result of false testimony by white women. Perhaps Maitland thinks E. M. Forster is a male chauvinist pig; perhaps she discounts the evidence of history or merely thinks we should not quote it because it gives comfort to rapists in her society; but unless one is a racist or sexist oneself, one has strongly to insist that the lives of black men are no less valuable than the lives of white women.

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Scots bugle blast

Alan Lawson, Radical Scotland

It was as much with amazement as with anger that the editorial collective of *Radical Scotland* read the 'hatchet job' review of our magazine (*NS* 8 August).

Since its inception in 1983 the magazine's strategy has clearly been to provide a forum for Scottish political debate (a function undertaken by no other political journal), and to enable a Scottish perspective to be taken on British and international affairs. The magazine has consistently argued the case for self-determination for Scotland, and embarked more than a year ago on a series of policy articles for the self-governing society which we envisage. We have devoted our centre pages to Third World issues on a regular basis. We have drawn the links between cultural and political issues in Scotland at the present time.

However, we apparently suffer from 'inadequate advertising'. This is, apart from anything else, arithmetically inaccurate, since if it were true we would have collapsed; in fact, we have been able to expand the magazine up to its current 40 pages, with no increase in cover price. We would also prefer not to take advertising from the capitalist giants like ICI. Our over-the-counter sales have steadily increased, and we now sell more copies in Scotland (bi-monthly) than *New Statesman, Marxism Today,* or *New Socialist.*

Misguided — or just short-sighted?

Oliver Owen, Hove

In your leader (*NS* 29 August) you write that Mrs Thatcher's government has been 'wholly blind', to a benign aspect of trade unionism. This exemplifies what seems a too-frequent leftish mistake; underestimating an opponent's capacity, or overestimating his incapacity. 'Wholly blind' is pretty strong stuff!

In the general critique of the right, the Poor Fools syndrome carries a double penalty. Underestimation as a reflex, in the first place, is always dangerous. But secondly, if you just blame weaknesses — errors of assessment, foolishness, or as in this case blindness — for their objectionableness, there is some implication there that otherwise their attitudes and policies might approximate roughly to your own. In other words they are misguided but mean well, in your terms, about political and social objectives. That notion is far-fetched, short-sighted, and disabling.

Sorry, Girobank

Carolyne Keirdia, London, NW7

I am writing to correct a mistake in the article on ethnical investment (*NS* 8 August). National Giro do have a Visa credit card plus an excellent facility of flexi-plan loans where the customer can borrow and repay sums as he/she chooses after agreeing on a monthly payment, which like a budget account determines the amount possible to borrow. Let's hope this government does *not* privatise such an excellent banking service.

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EMERGENCY! Needed, a man willing to have sincere involvement with warm, sensitive, friendly woman, Rubens type. Must be mature 60-70, eligible, caring, supportive. Box (36)3642. N36.27

GENT, 57, N/S, T/T, would work for pleasantly plump lady struggling in business or farming. Secretarial/manual in return for board, lodging, love and affection. Box (36)3629. N36.29

GENT, 69, Blackpool, Lancashire, slim, affectionate, loving, humanitarian politics, interests: music, writing, seeks slim, affectionate lady, similar age, to correspond or meet if residing near. Box (37)3674. N37.12

HAPPY WOMAN, thirties, requires scintillating stimulation from a tolerant, monogamous male companion who's had the chips knocked off, within visiting distance of Bradford. Box (36)3663. N36.31

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INDIAN, BROAD-MINDED, divorced male, fiftyish, visiting lecturer abroad — veggy, n/s, teeto, seeks professional lady. Likes: kids, theosophy, teaching, active life. Replies around Berks. Box (37)3694. N37.13

INTELLIGENT, CARING woman (35), movie/arts freak, seeks joyous fellow-traveller to share life's adventures or any part of the journey. NW England but distance no real obstacle. Box (37)3686. N37.14

LADY, 50s, seeks gentleman friend, 50s-60s, for shared outings, wining and dining, discussion, countryside etc. Box (37)3672. N37.15

LEFT-WING PROFESSIONAL man, 30, hard working, intellectual, cultured, kind, supportive, conversational, domesticated and attractive — almost viceless — seeks Ms *Right. Photo please.* London. Box (37)3681. N37.16

LIGHT-HEARTED, SOCIALLY aware, attractive, professional woman, 36, seeks strong, interesting, witty, sensitive man. Does one exist round Manchester? Smokers welcome. Photo appreciated. Box (37)3703. N37.17

LONDON MALE, 26, slim, smart appearance, sporty, outgoing, seeks similar female, 19-32, for good times. Photo preferred. Box (37)3710. N37.18

LONELY BACHELOR, 46, working class graduate. Interests: cinema, theatre, walking, politics. Would like to meet lady of similar age. Perception and insight more important than looks/status. East Midlands. Box (36) 3622. N36.33

LOVING, LAUGHTER-LACKING, literary Lancastrian lady languishes for fair-minded, fanciable, fortyish, 5' 11½" + fellow. Box (37)3706. N37.19

MALE ACADEMIC, 41, humorous and *sensitive, seeks intelligent, attractive woman* (30-45), to share life and interests in books, travel, wining and dining. London/Midlands. Box (37)3678. N37.20

MALE GRADUATE (28), socialist, into song writing, folk, rock, classical music, philosophy, economics, politics and intelligent conversation, seeks female (20-33), similarly inclined. Box (37)3693. N37.21

MALE GRADUATE, 29, slim, Guardian reader/muesli eater, greening socialist. Seeks warm, humorous female to share interests in arts, books, music and politics. London/N. Kent. Box (37)3679. N37.22

MAN, 53, London, would like to meet woman, any age, mainly for afternoon cinema-going. Box (37)3685. N37.23

MERCUTIAN, ACTONIAN (Elizan not Lordian) Rasumovskovite, widow, face wouldn't stop a clock, 58, would like to meet kind man with sense of humour, view to marriage. ALA. Box (37)3689. N37.24

OLD FRIENDS: an introduction agency for the over forties. Loneliness is not inevitable. Details from: Anne Brent, 18a Highbury New Park, London N5 2DB. 01-226 5432. N15.31

PROFESSIONAL GLASGOW-based, slim, attractive, intelligent girl, seeks tall, slim, strong minded, kind, caring, professional man. No intense emotional problems please. Box (37)3683. N37.25

PROFESSIONAL MAN, fifties, academically minded, married but seeks discreet, caring and sensitive relationship, with long-term lover, 35-55. Perhaps single parent. Intelligence more important than looks. London. Box (37)3671. N37.26

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN, youthful 51, slim, pleasing. Up-market tastes and interests. Would respond well to the company of a personable, intelligent man. Manchester/Cheshire. Box (37)3677. N37.27

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN GRADUATE, social sciences background, early 40s, interested in talking, films, theatre, dining out, walking, seeks similar male for outings/friendship. London/Canterbury/South East. Box (36)3654. N36.36

PROFESSIONAL YOUNG *lady, 20s, slim and* blonde, wishes to meet professional gentleman 28-35, for friendship. Box (37)3687. N37.28

SINGLE MALE, early thirties, interests include: photography, Beethoven, travel, personal growth, seeks similar or thereabouts female, to help foster mutually loving relationship. Box (37)3697. N37.29

SINGLE WOMAN, mid-thirties, reasonably attractive, interested in music, arts, politics, open spaces, wishes to meet intelligent, funny, warm man, similar age, living not too far away. South West of Birmingham. Photo much appreciated. Box (37)3670. N37.30

TRIUMPH OF HOPE over experience! Semi-Continental woman, multifarious interests, joie de vivre, seeks amiable, spirited, youthful man (over 55), intelligent, thinking and a mensh. For friendship, w/end companionship. London. Box (37)3696. N37.31

UNATTACHED MALE, 40s, all typical Scorpio characteristics, reliable friend/partner, seeks sincere caring relationship, with compatible, possibly problematic, worldy, sexually liberated female. Status unimportant. London. Box (37)3669. N37.32

WOODY ALLEN-ISH, cosmopolitan, 51, London, interests include: National Trust, usual arts, Orientalia, Bach, Mediterranean, seeks attractive, lively lady interested in Third World travel. Box (37)3646. N36.43

UNCONVENTIONAL FEMALE, 30, English graduate, interests: cinema, pop music, travel, wishes to meet similar male for socialising. *Northamptonshire area. Photo appreciated* and returned. Box (37)3676. N37.33

WIDOW, 60s, intelligent, travelled, cultured, living South, seeks unattached, active, professional/academic counterpart to share and enliven the remaining years with interest and pleasure. Box (36)3651. N36.42

WOMAN (50, divorced, graduate, employed, family grown-up, wide ranging cultural/outdoor interests), seeks similar male (50-60) for companionship. Glasgow/Edinburgh area. Box (37)3675. N37.34

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AGENDA

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MON 15 SEPT

CENSORSHIP AND PRESS FREEDOM IN SOUTH AFRICA. Public Meeting 7.30pm. Corner House, Manchester. Speakers: Michael Robinson, File on Four, BBC; John Battersby, London Bureau Chief South African Morning Newspapers. Chair: Gerry Northam, Brass Tacks, BBC. Contact: Nancy Jaeger, Campaign for Press & Broadcasting Freedom, 061-832 6991.

WED 17 SEPT

CENTRAL LONDON FABIAN SOCIETY 7.30pm. 'The Future for Social Security after the Review'. 11 Dartmouth Street, SW1. Speakers and Questions.

SAT 13 SEPT

CHILE TODAY. Discussion, debate, music and videos. 12 noon-9pm. Bloomsbury Baptist Centre, Shaftesbury Avenue. £1.50 unwaged. Details: Chile Solidarity Campaign, 01-272 4298.

THURS 18 SEPT

THE RED ROSE, Islington. Public Meeting (admission free). Addressed by John Palmer, on 'Towards a Socialist Strategy for Europe'. 8pm, The Red Rose, 129 Seven Sisters Road, London N7.

FRI 26 SEPT

SECOND CONFERENCE on Realism in the Human Sciences. Speakers include: Roy Bhaskar, Sue Clegg and Michael Rustin, at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow. FRI 26-SUN 28. Cost £6. Details from Steven Sharples, Department of Architecture, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.

SUN 28 SEPT

REUNION OF RATIONALISTS at 3.00pm in the Library at Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, WC1.

THURS 2 OCT

INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY — The Lessons We Can Learn. A workshop for all interested in increasing public control and involvement in services. Speakers: Suzy Croft and Peter Beresford. Venue, Advance, 14 Bloomsbury Square, London WC1A 2LP, 2-5pm. Details: 01-223 7989.

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DRINK

Pack of Alsatians

Stephen Brook

DESPITE THE FACT that the wine trade, wine writers too, have been exalting Alsace wines for decades, they still fail to attract hordes of purchasers. In part this is because it is not immediately clear what they are.

Superficially, Alsace wine, encased in tall flute bottles and identified by grape variety rather than district, resembles German wine more than French. Many Alsatian grape varieties, notably Riesling and Gewurztraminer, are unknown in other parts of France. Yet Alsace is French wine, not German. The wines are fermented until they are completely dry, which means they are both higher in alcohol than German wines and lack the residual sweetness of most German wines available here. This makes them more suitable for consumption with meals. Prices range from about £3 to an ingot of gold, but many excellent wines can be found at the lower end of the scale. These wines are honestly made, clean, crisp and fresh, and far more reliable than German or French wines at comparable prices. Of 36 bottles tasted blind over the last few weeks, not one was poor or positively unpleasant.

Riesling is the supreme grape of the Alsace, as it is of Germany. Fruity, aromatic, vigorous and stylish, it is racy enough to be drunk on its own and usually full enough to accompany food. Some light-styled Rieslings, such as the 1983 Dopff & Irion, the 1984 Hugel (Dominic £3.89) and the 1985 Preiss-Zimmer, are ready to drink now, but some of the more concentrated wines, such as the 1982 Trimbach Cuvé Frédéric Emile (Oddbins £8.49) and the powerful Hugel Reserve Personelle (Dominic £8.69) should be kept for a few years. Two inexpensive wines stood out: the **1983 Willy Gisselbrecht** (Waitrose £3.05) and the 1983 cooperative wine from **St Hippolyte** (Majestic £3.09), both big, meaty wines that will improve with age.

Gewurztraminer is the grape everyone associates with Alsace. It's grown elsewhere in the world, but those wines rarely come close to the spicy, earthy richness of Alsatian Gewuztraminer. To prove the point I flung a bottle of Waitrose's 1984 South Tyrol Gewurztraminer (£3.05) into a blind tasting and had no difficulty identifying it. There are considerable variations in quality. At its best, Gewurztraminer is soft, rounded, spicy, almost musky, rich yet vigorous; at its worst, it can be flabby, oily, blowsy, lacking in acidity. Among the lighter styles, the **1985 Preiss-Zimmer**, the **1984 Hugel** (P. Dominic £4.49) and the **1983 Dopff & Irion Les Sorcières** were outstanding, while, at the top of the range, the **1983 Hugel Reserve Personelle** is magnificent. Sainsbury's 1984 wine is excellent value at £3.25, but other cheap Gewurztraminers showed less well, and the Trimbach wines didn't seem to justify their high prices. The 1981 Beyer Cuvée des Comtes d'Eguisheim had strong varietal character and a sweet buttery flavour that was atypical but striking.

Tokay d'Alsace is quite unrelated to the grape that makes Hungarian Tokay and is, in fact, Pinot Gris. Broad and rounded and often high in alcohol, it bears some resemblance to Gewurztraminer. Some examples have obtrusive lychee aromas on the nose and can be somewhat leaden in the mouth, but the wine certainly has a hefty individual character. I particularly liked the **1983 Dopff & Irion**, which is more stylish than most and clean on the finish.

Sylvaner is the grape that provides fresh light wines for everyday drinking, though they can lack character. The **1985 Preiss-Zimmer**, though a wine of no depth, seemed the best of an indifferent bunch. Pinot Blanc can make fruity but slightly austere wine, which again lacks the personality of Riesling or Gewurztraminer. The **1984 Hugel** (P. Dominic £3.59) is good, and the **1984 Zind-Humbrecht** and **1985 Kuentz-Bas** even better and likely to improve. Muscat is my least favourite Alsace wine, a far cry from the richly sweet varieties of southern Europe and equally removed from the irresistibly light, racy Moscato of northern Italy. I find them very dry, bland, grapy and innocuous. All the examples tasted were clean and pleasant, but only two showed any positive character: the **1982 Hugel** and the **1984 Trimbach** (Oddbins £4.95). These are wines to be drunk as aperitifs, since their delicacy tends to be overwhelmed by most food.

If you find that you like the basic styles of Alsace wines — and it's hard to imagine anyone disliking well-made Riesling or Gewurztraminer — you might want to sample some specialities.

First, there are the Grand Cru wines, strictly regulated individual vineyard wines; they are not cheap, but often less than the top ranges of Hugel or Trimbach. In exceptional years, such as 1983 and 1985, grapes attain exceptional maturity if picked late in the season and these Vendange Tardive wines are usually massive, rich and full. They are not easy to find, but La Vigneronne of 105 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 (and its mail-order subsidiary L'Alsacien), maintains probably the largest stock in the country, with over 90 Alsace wines dating back to the 1950s. The 1985 wines will be excellent but expensive, so it's worth stocking up on the equally superb 1983 vintage while bottles are still available. Hugel wines are widely stocked and Peter Dominic has a good range. The light, racy Preiss-Zimmer range is available at Victoria Wine Company (£3.95 to £4.49). You may have to hunt around for the other wines mentioned and it's worth keeping an eye out for other excellent producers such as Dopff Au Moulin, Faller, Muré and Schlumberger. □

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Save, save, save

Geoff Dyer

MY FAMILY HAS always taken solace in the fact that money can't buy you happiness (even if it could we'd rather save it up for a rainy day) but now, it seems, money can't even buy you a micro-wave oven.

My Auntie Irene has just won half a million quid on the football pools. No kidding. My dad told me about it when I last went home: 'Your Auntie Rene,' he said, 'has become a very rich woman.' As a rule he prefixes any discussion of money with words like 'small' or 'little' so the word 'very' was very unusual. I'd have expected him to say she'd come into a bit of money — but, no, her boat had really come in and my dad was still bobbing around in its wake.

Auntie Irene is in her sixties; she's married to Uncle Harold (the H, by the way, is silent), a retired electrician. For the last 30 years they've lived in a council house near _____ (as Jane Austen puts it) in Gloucestershire. Irene's hobbies are drinking tea and watching television; Harold's are keeping whippets, building birdboxes and ripening tomatoes in his greenhouse. When I was young he was the person my parents least wanted me to speak like. He never said he or she, only 'im or 'er. Which is exactly what he said when the man from the pools called round: ' 'Er's upstairs.' 'Er came downstairs a pensioner with a bad leg; she went back up them with a spring in her step and a cheque for 500 grand.

Rene had ticked the box for no publicity and the family (my dad, another brother and two sisters, all of whom live within three or four miles of each other) was sworn to secrecy, speculating among themselves about what sort of hand-out they could expect. A precedent had been set by Uncle John when he won £1,000 on the Premium Bonds and gave everybody a fiver. *Pro rata*, that would work out at £2,500 apiece but the consensual expectation was £5,000 each — with a micro-wave oven thrown in. What they got was £500 and an oven-ready chicken. My dad was a victim of his vocabulary. He'd expected a bit of a hand-out and that's what he got.

Rene and Harold weren't much more generous with themselves. They gave half to their daughter and son-in-law, bought a new car and a micro-wave for themselves and dumped the rest in a deposit account at Barclays where the manager met them with champagne.

Nothing else has changed much. Harold, who has always had a reputation for being tight ('he'd skin a turd for two bob') still likes dodging his round at the Beehive — if he didn't people might get suspicious — but sits on his stool with the quiet confidence of a man who could buy the whole pub if he really put his wallet to it.

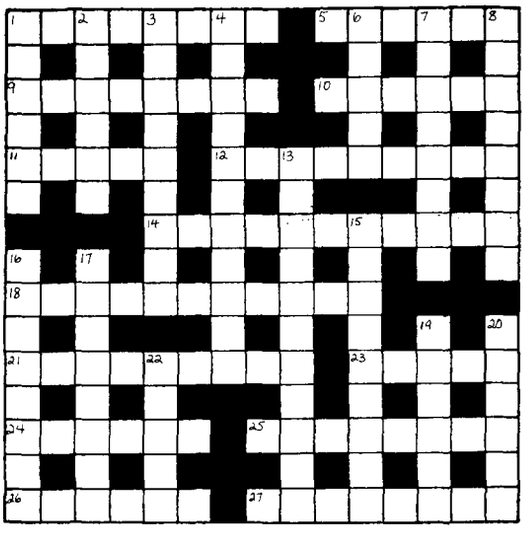
For the rest of my relatives the fact that Rene and Harold have done so little with their money increases the vicarious and subjunctive pleasure of thinking what *they* would have done with it. Even my dad reckons he'd know what to do with that kind of money. I'm not so sure. My parents are part of the thrift generation, never mean but always — of necessity — careful with money that has been earned through a lifetime of badly paid overtime. They have never rented or bought anything on HP; they've never borrowed money and have only rarely spent it on themselves. Their annual expenditure on themselves apart from *very* basics is negligible. My dad's instinctive response when he comes to pay for anything in a shop is a shocked '*how* much?' He is impossible to buy for at Christmas; he doesn't smoke, read or drink and he has a garage crammed with tools.

What he likes doing is hoarding, finding things or picking them up cheap and hanging on to them in case they come in handy. (We have three sheds, the third of which is full of the wood out of which he hopes to make a fourth.)

Against this patient labour of accumulation the pools offer money from nowhere, so that even when a big win occurs it still has the quality of an illusion, of something that cannot be grasped (the rapidity with which the money was back in the hands of the bankers!). The pools win offers that which your whole life has led you not only to do without but to see and

Weekend Crossword 1531

PRIZE: £10 Book Token for the first correct solution opened. Entries to Crossword 1531, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU by first post 23 September.



Name_____

Address_____

_____

ACROSS

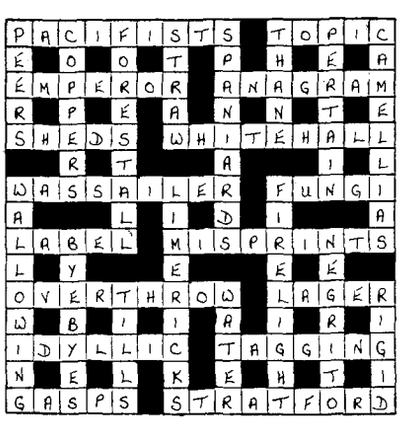
1. One of these animals needs rod and whip (8)
5. Like a date for soft words (6)
9. Noticed a sign in the grass (8)
10. Hide if I'm missing but it hides the rod (6)
11. Exercise which makes healthy look disappear (5)
12. Where there is a craze about breaking the code (9)
14. It is fitting in a murderer to prepare food for an explorer (7,4)
18. Hot girl in terror of political union (11)
21. Where to get information of depression in town (9)
23. A mule converted by theologians (5)
24. One piece of writing includes time for metaphors (6)
25. Noble lady incorporated in cupboard (8)
26. Printer's craft? (6)
27. In the desert where oil and dates are to be found (8)

DOWN

1. Good speed for bad sailor (6)
2. The lovers see mother in the glass (6)
3. Be concerned about sense or ornament (9)
4. To play with her and me when wandering somewhere in Greece (11)
6. Drug taken to help one in a race? (5)
7. It is a rule that a servant goes to the party (8)
8. Reverses for a player in lots of games (8)
13. A measure preserves shops (11)
15. The cult ran no changes after dark (9)
16. Punishment with a nine-inch ruler (8)
17. Grow ever more quickly, giving the novelist something to play with (8)
19. Most up-to-date, like us in the home (6)
20. Is read freely and lifted (6)
22. Tree used for a label everyone recognizes (5)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1529



Prizewinner to 1529

Mrs S. J. Johnson
(East Bolden, Tyne & Wear)

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accept as impossibly remote.

Paradoxically, then, the hegemony of the windfall works through a system of promises in which, even at the moment of fulfilment, you are, at heart, incapable of believing. The windfall flies in the face of the evidence of a lifetime and cannot be assimilated. And this is why, pathetic though it may seem, there is even, in the inability of my family to enjoy the long hoped-for, long looked-forward-to jackpot, something resilient and dignified, a negative imprint of solidarity; something, in other words, to merit a (modest) celebration. □

Geoff Dyer's study of John Berger, Ways of Telling, *is published by Pluto next month.*

Weekend competition

No 2941 **Set by Russell Lucas**

We've had Andrew Marvell's 'To his Coy Mistress'; may we now have *Ms* Marvell's verses doing the reverse? Max. 16 lines by 25 September.

No 2938 **Set by Red Dorn**

New 'Dial-A-. . . ' telephone services.

Report **By Ernest Oswald fflap**

I'm afraid I shall betray my age, but the telephone *isn't* a civilised machine. It's loud, imperious, intrusive — and liable to shock one into saying things which would, in epistolary communication, have either been elegantly blurred at the edges or altogether avoided. Even for summoning emergency assistance, it isn't *noticeably* more efficient than carrier pigeons, or the penny post. On the last occasion that I called for an ambulance, — from this very building, as it happens — I was told that, sorry, I should have to wait: there was already one emergency in the area. In short, why anyone should *choose* to use the telephone — just for the fun, so to speak — is a mystery. However, in the interests of science, I have essayed a few of the real 'services' provided by the telephone company (Starline informed me that,as a Virgo, my love life was looking a bit more secure; Cricketline that Derbyshire had won the toss) and, dear friends, your entries are certainly no more incredible than those. A baffled ten pounds to each winner.

DIAL-A-ROYAL-PRESS-SECRETARY

(*National anthem on xylophone*) Good day. Reports you may have read, or indeed written, in this morning's papers about the Duchess of York are completely fabricated. She has not been taking naked underwater photographs of her dietician. Nor indeed *has* she a dietician. She eats the same food as the Princess of Wales. Nor is it the case that several baskets of live octopi were slaughtered on Buckingham Palace premises. In any case, this is a penchant *unknown* in the early stages of pregnancy, a condition in any case not presently appertaining to either Duchess or Princess. None of the corgis has AIDS. The Queen enjoys a small tipple with Denis Thatcher, but he has never swapped drunkenly bitchy stories with her. Today's coded press message as follows: *The gardener's bucket leaks. The gardener's bucket leaks.*

WILL BELLENGER

DIAL-A-NANNY SERVICE FOR TIRED BUSINESSMEN

I was wondering when I would hear from you, dear. Don't think that because Nanny can't see you she doesn't know what you're up to. I know.

I know, for instance, that you don't always finish your vegetables. You know very well there are starving children in Europe who'd be glad of them. I think some people's eyes are too big for their tummies.

And you may think you're fine and grand in the big city, but you needn't forget your manners. A little bird tells me that you don't always play fair with the other boys. Remember, if you're too sharp you'll cut yourself and 'I want' doesn't get. It'll all end in tears, you'll see. I'm telling you for your own good.

Now, now, it's no good making cellar steps at me. If the wind changes, you could stay like that. Besides, sailors don't cry . . .

NOEL PETTY

EDMONDSLINE

Was her maiden name really Moriarty? How much did her PR firm pay Wogan? Does she prefer granary bread? What does she think of Eastenders? *What really happened in the Modern Languages Faculty at Cambridge in 1971? Was she really turned down in favour of Stephanie Beacham for* The Colbys? *How much did she pay for the Jacobean manor house near Stroud? Yes, all the facts you wanted about Frances Edmonds are now available on our 24 hour EDMONDSLINE staffed by an expert team of PR executives, publicists and chat-show researchers. Say goodbye to sleepless nights trying to remember whether she called Ian Botham 'a dumb blond' in an interview in* Women's Weekly *or on* Saturday Night with Les Dawson. *Dial that bloody number now!*

NICHOLAS MURRAY

FASHION FLASH

Good morning! This is FASHION FLASH here, with all the latest in clothes and accessory ideas, as at 4.30 this morning.

First of all, it's out with all that ghastly lime green you've been accumulating all summer and, while you're at it, you might as well chuck out the 16 pairs of flat shoes you've bought since we told you last week it would be flats, flats, flats all winter.

The very latest whisper we heard from the Oldfield stables is heels, and not just heels, but soles. Yes the platform is back. You won't find any in the shops yet, but you can get round this by sticking five rubber soles on your old high heels.

And the rainbow look is definitely out. Brown, grey, taupe, sludge are just the colours to blend in with the winter weather. As they say, if you can't beat it, join it!

KATIE MALLETT

DIAL-A-TAP

Caller dials

Tape: Click . . . (*Repeats ten seconds of last conversation made by caller)* Click . . . This is Dial-a-Tape, the British . . . Whirr . . . Telecom game where . . . Buzz . . . each day we hook in on someone's private telephone line . . . Click . . . but YOU do the listening . . . Buzzzz . . . And today's top tappee is . . . Click . . . someone who's been photographed at several . . . Crackle . . . CND demonstrations, someone who's written too many letters to the . . . Whirr . . . local paper, someone who came to our attention when they slagged off Jeffrey . . . Whine . . . Archer on the bus; Mrs Ethel . . . Click . . . Rudge of Derby . . .

Caller: Hey, that's me!

New tape, activated by voice recognition: Yes caller, by tapping in on your own phone you win a fabulous holiday for one at GCHQ! But remember, we'll claim that your wires have been damaged by a falling tree, because for you, Mrs Ethel Rudge, your lines are . . . COMING ON DOWN!!! (*Hysterical Applause*)

NICK WRAY

DIAL-A-COMP

Running out of original ideas? For the jaded literary competition setter we offer Dial-a-Comp, a selection of witty and stimulating themes that will set your readers minds to work. All suggestions guaranteed completely unused.

Hello, caller, this is your monthly list of suggestions provided by our Dial-a-Comp team. You should vary the wording slightly to disguise the source, or your rivals will begin to ask questions!

Misleading advice for foreigners!
Anagrams of famous politicians.
Parodies of Ted Hughes.
Rejection letters to famous authors.
Misleading advice for foreigners!
Parodies of William McGonagall.
Anagrams of famous politicians.

Good, eh? Well, if you don't like any of these, we are sorry, but you could always try ringing 01-253-2001. Thankyou for calling!

GAVIN J. S. ROSS

WHINE OF THE WEEK

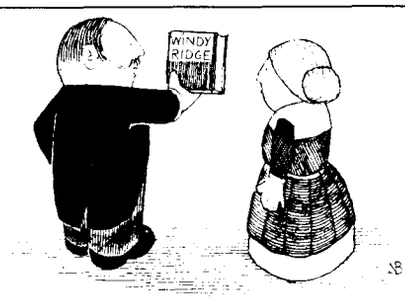
This week's consumer complaint is the becquerel — a word you need to be familiar with if you're to hold your own in bus queue or public bar. Practise it a few times in conversation before the mirror so that it slips easily into any dicussion of nuclear energy, Chernobyl, fat-stock prices, British weather. You don't want to be caught tongue-tied, do you?

Becquerels are units of radio-activity — if you're interested in the technicalities tune to the Open University programme on BBC 2 on Sunday at 3.00 a.m. — and are to be deplored. They have ruined the Welsh tourist industry, lamb chops, England's batting average and TV reception in the north-east.

Next week we'll link them to unemployment.

Remember — to keep in touch with what's new in complaints dial Whine of the Week, every week.

D. A. PRINCE



'A minor emendation, Miss Brontë, with the popular market in mind'

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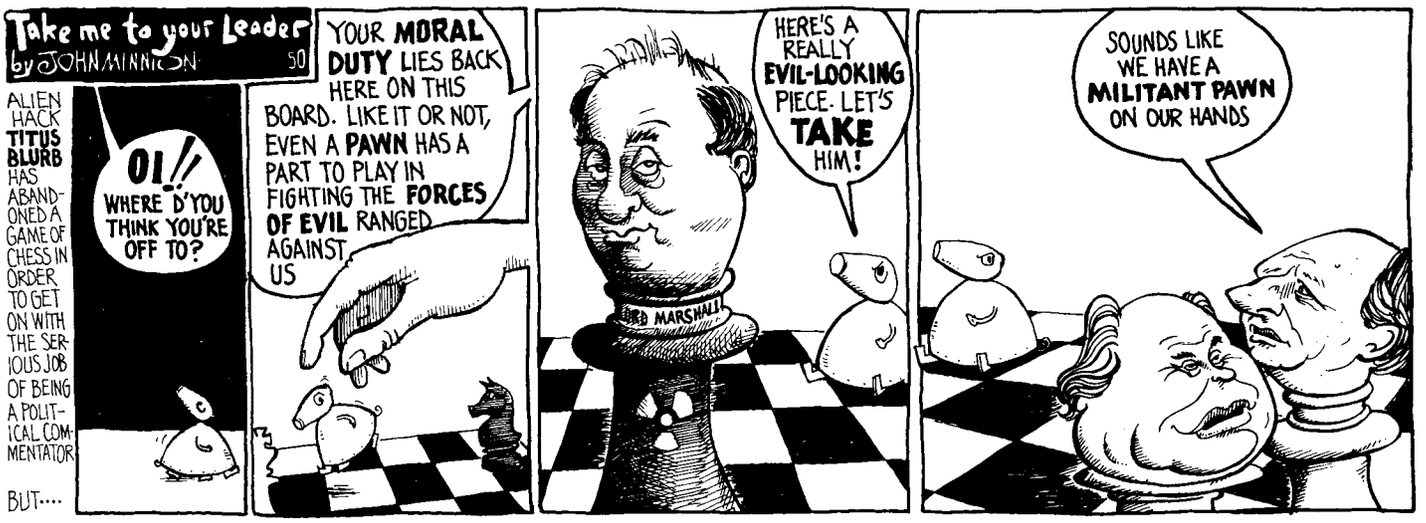
Take me to your Leader
by JOHN MINNION
50
ALIEN HACK TITUS BLURB HAS ABANDONED A GAME OF CHESS IN ORDER TO GET ON WITH THE SERIOUS JOB OF BEING A POLITICAL COMMENTATOR
BUT....
OI!! WHERE D'YOU THINK YOU'RE OFF TO?
YOUR MORAL DUTY LIES BACK HERE ON THIS BOARD. LIKE IT OR NOT, EVEN A PAWN HAS A PART TO PLAY IN FIGHTING THE FORCES OF EVIL RANGED AGAINST US
HERE'S A REALLY EVIL-LOOKING PIECE. LET'S TAKE HIM!
MARSHALL
SOUNDS LIKE WE HAVE A MILITANT PAWN ON OUR HANDS

Chess

TRUST SMILING Jim Callaghan to steal the show at the closing ceremony of the London half of the K-K match with a quotation that was bound to strike the audience as being spot on. Observing that Shakespeare was not always right, he remarked that the saying 'The evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones' (*Julius Caesar*) certainly did not apply to the GLC and its posthumous chess sponsorship. Actually, if memory serves me it is the character Mark Antony who says that, and of course his reputation for reliability stood with his contemporaries much as an MoD briefing does with us.

No matter, it's not only public speakers who can be aided by such quotations. For the benefit of the puzzled loser in a simultaneous display Shaw helpfully explains in *The Apple Cart* that 'One man that has a mind and knows it, can always beat ten men who haven't and don't'. Let our notoriously scruffy players remember that 'So may the outward shows be least themselves: the world is still deceived with ornament' (*Merchant of Venice*) For the mature player, trembling with paedophobia, there is the pre-game ploy of commenting in a not so *sotto voce* 'One would think his mother's milk were scarce out of him' — though at the end of the game he may be forced to admit 'How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to *play* a thankless child (*King Lear*).

Karpov and Kasparov shared the brilliancy prize of £10,000 for their creative efforts in game 11. The manner of disbursement was imaginative, the two adversaries each being given a bag full of gold sovereigns. This recalls a famous episode, colloquially echoed whenever a flashy move is greeted with cries of 'Shower of gold coins!'. It was Black's 23rd in the following game that induced the original cascade:

Lewitzky-Marshall, Breslau 1912. French Defence.
1. d4 e6 2. e4 d5 3. Nc3 c5 4. Nf3 Nc6 5. exd5 exd5 6. Be2 Nf6 7. 0-0 Be7 8. Bg5 0-0 9. dxc5 Be6 10. Nd4 Bxc5 11. Nxe6 fxe6 12. Bg4 Qd6 13. Bh3 Rae8 14. Qd2? Bb4! 15. Bxf6 Rxf6 16. Rad1 Qc5 17. Qe2 Bxc3 18. bxc3 Qxc3 19. Rxd5 Nd4 20. Qh5 Ref8 21. Re5 If 21. Rc5 Rxf2! **Rh6 22. Qg5 Rxh3 23. Rc5 Qg3!! 0-1.**

While the two generalissimos waged their stately war in the Park Lane Hotel, the lower ranks were fighting it out at the Great Eastern. Simen Agdestein, currently the youngest GM, Norway's first world-class player and a junior football international to boot, won the Lloyds Bank Masters with the dynamic score of 8 wins out of 9 games. His performance was marred by just a single loss, to Julian Hodgson. August had started inauspiciously for Hodgson — after 5 rounds of the British Championship he was grovelling around with a wretched $1\frac{1}{2}$ points. Then something clicked and he won 5 games on the roll (I was one of the victims). By the end of the month he had built enough confidence to notch up $7\frac{1}{2}$ points in the LBM for second place and, more significantly in the long run, a GM norm. Another player exuding confidence at the LBM was the young Indian star Anand, who has a habit of banging out his moves at an absolutely frantic pace. He treated some opponents in the same way that an express train tackles a level-crossing — taking, for example, only 16 minutes to complete a 33-move destruction of de Firmian (an experienced American GM). Sharpest of all to lose to a thinkless child.

One of the games from this tournament provides interesting material for a study of the conditions under which a destructive piece-sacrifice on g5 works:

Kudrin-van der Sterren, Lloyds Bank Masters 1986. Guioco Piano.
1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Bc5 4. c3 Nf6 5. b4 Bd6 6. d3 d6 7. 0-0 0-0 8. Nbd2 Re8 9. Bb3 a6 10. Nc4 Ba7 11. Bg5 h6 12. Bh4 g5 You might think that is just asking for trouble, but sometimes it is the right way for Black to handle this line. For example, a Chandler-Karpov game, from the 1983 Master Game series that never got televised, went 1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Bc5 4. 0-0 Nf6 5. d3 d6 6. c3 0-0 7. Bg5 a6 8. Bb3 h6 9. Bh4 g5 10. Bg3 Ba7 11. Nbd2 Bg4 12. Kh1 Bh5! with a very comfortable position for Black. Karpov commented that here 10. Nxg5?! could be met by 10 . . . hxg5 11. Bxg5 Kg7 12. Qf3 Rh8 and if 13. Qg3 Nh5. The lesson to be drawn from comparing these two games is that White should aim to get in Nc4 before playing Bg5. **13. Nxg5! hxg5 14. Bxg5 Bg4 15. Qd2 Kg7 16. Ne3 Qd7 17. Bxf6 + Kxf6 18. f4 Kg7 19. fxe5 Re7 20. Kh1 dxe5 21. Nf5 + Bxf5 22. exf5! f6 23. Rf3 Kh8** The prettiest point of White's play is to be seen in the variation 23 . . . Rh8 24. Rg3 + Kf8 25. Qh6 + !. **24. Be6 Qd8 25. Rh3 + Rh7 26. Rxh7 + Kxh7 27. Rf1 Nd4** There is no other way of keeping the White Rook away from his King, but the White Queen and Bishop can now commit regicide on their own. **28. cxd4 Qxd4 29. Qe2 Kg7 30. Qh5 Rf8 31. Qg6 + Kh8 32. Qh6 mate 1-0.**

George Botterill

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This England

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☐ Now the silly season is upon us I thought it appropriate to tell you about a holiday company offering coach tours to 'Fort Murdoch'. Such has been the demand to see the barbed wire fence which is allegedly higher than that on the Berlin Wall that Jim Petty's Carefree Holidays concern has made it first stop on his coach tours. 'We tried it out around Easter and it proved a great success. We stopped outside the plant and even had pickets wandering up to the coach to tell us their cause.' — *UK Press Gazette* (M. Ashton)

☐ . . . restrictive undergarments are the main cause of aggression in the police force. Surely, if this be true, then it is also at least a contributing cause of football hooliganism and other violence, since excessively tight jeans are so fashionable just now. — Letter, *Daily Telegraph* (Annabelle May)

☐ A man was questioned by police in Reading, Berks, after posting a letter while wearing only a scouting scarf, a woggle and flip-flop sandals. — *Financial Times* (Bob Worcester)

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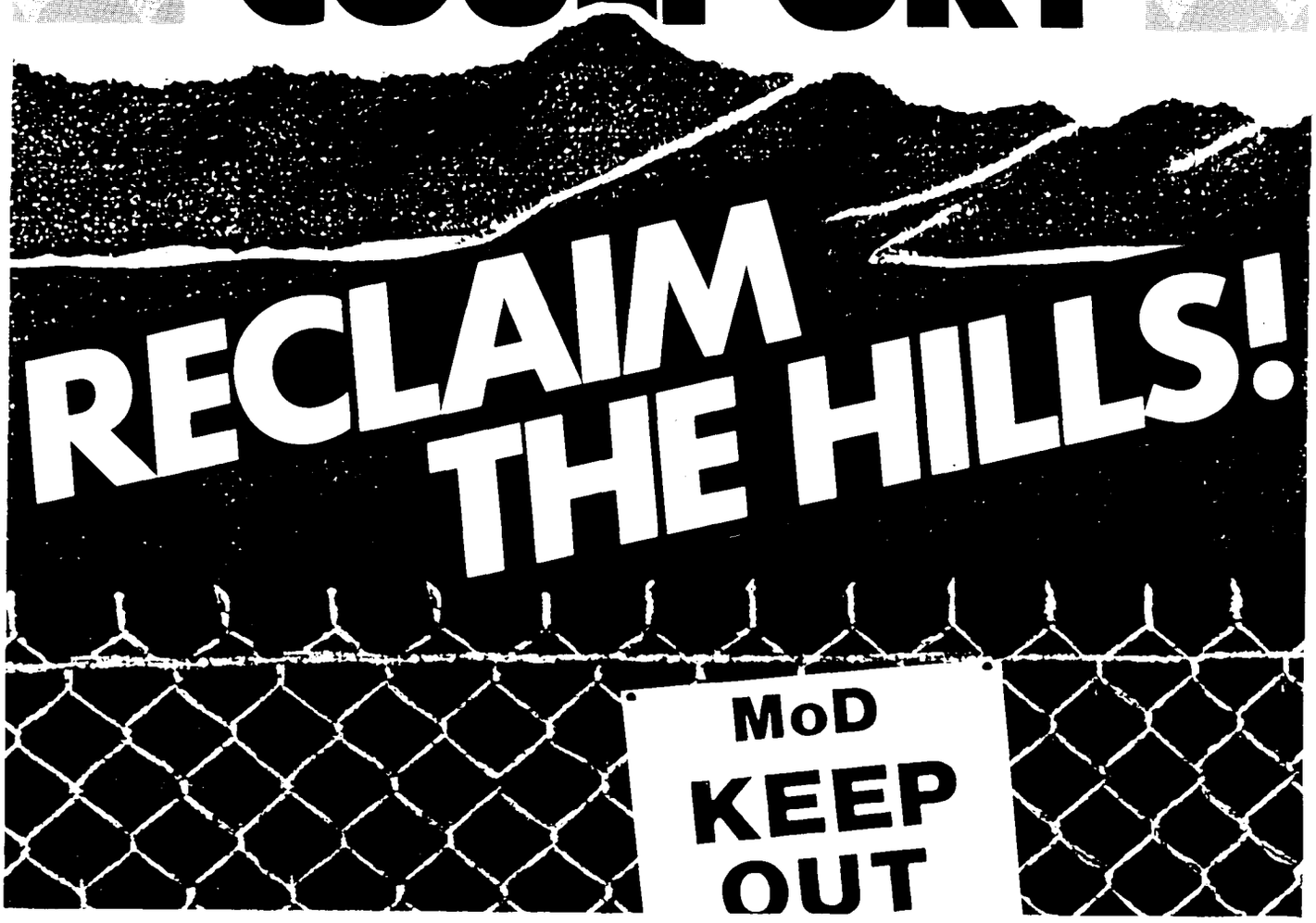

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